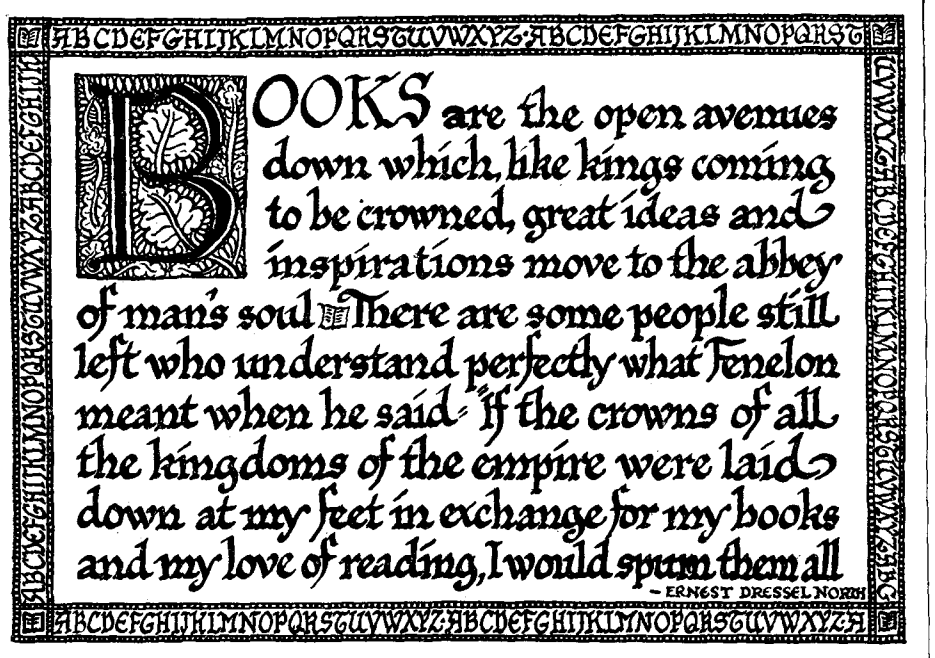
[illegible] MAY 23 1932

TEN CENTS A COPY

The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

VOLUME VIII | NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MAY 21, 1932 | NUMBER 44


BOOKS are the open avenues down which, like kings coming to be crowned, great ideas and inspirations move to the abbey of man's soul There are some people still left who understand perfectly what Fenelon meant when he said "If the crowns of all the kingdoms of the empire were laid down at my feet in exchange for my books and my love of reading, I would spurn them all
—ERNEST DRESSEL NORTH

DRAWN FOR THE SATURDAY REVIEW BY R. J. BUCHOLZ

The Reading of Poetry

IN the market for cultural commodities, music is up, painting is steady, poetry is down. Poetry is not being read. The many poetry magazines, the syndicated poetry of the newspapers, or the mellifluous readings by enterprising poets, may create a vague and pleasing illusion to the contrary, but it is only an illusion. A tiny group, ninety per cent of them practising poets, read the poetry magazines; poetry readings, like lectures, demonstrate mild curiosity and little else, with few who come away from them ready to buy and read for themselves books of poetry; and the syndicated verse of the newspapers is proof of the contention, for it is not poetry, does not try to be poetry, and is (generally speaking) an indictment of the mass mind that likes to bathe its emotions in moral slush or tinkling trivialities.

A class—the cultivated class if we may be allowed so general a term—has been abdicating in this high region. They have abdicated, for a different reason in politics, and now they are ceasing to read poetry because the effort is too great, because their tastes are flattening toward the commonplace, because they are gorged with news, facts, and the easier life of fiction. They have lost perceptibly, as a result, in tone, in quickness of emotional apprehension, in subtlety, and in depth and fineness of feeling. For nothing trains, nothing exercises these faculties like poetry. Whatever else poetry may be, good poetry is complete expression. Since we think and observe and even reason by or through our emotions, whatever most concerns the human race must be charged and surcharged with emotion before it is viable, and this necessity requires ultimately, for reasons not less certain for being still obscure, a rhythmic utterance, and a phrasing in sound and sense which reaches toward the impossible ideal of words exactly fitted to the thought. No one in the long history of culture has ever denied that poetry, thus conceived, was of all reading the most humane and the most luminous—

> Fraunceys Petrak—whos rethorike sweete
> Enlumyned al Ytaille of poetrie—

although the judicious have always regarded as essential poetry much that in its form seemed to be prose. And this reading has been one of the great influences in adult education which term should not be only applied to the belated teaching of the backward, but more truly refers to a continuous progress through life in comprehending self and environment. Poetry is so important in adult education that to explain why we have ceased to read it would seem to be difficult.

It is not difficult to explain, because poetry unfortunately is not indispensable; cruder and less taxing substitutes are easy to find. The approximate, pretty good, and comfortably mediocre of prose washes around us. Ours is no perfectionist civilization, and our abdicating class, feeling downward toward the masses, is easily satisfied with blunted phrases and diluted statements which require neither mental nor emotional concentration. They do not realize that one cause of the superiority of what used to be called an educated man was a quality of mind which came from rigorous reading of lines in which paragraphs had been put into sentences and then given wings.

The large extension of our interest toward science has also been responsible for such a decline in the morale of culture. But this is an alibi, not an excuse. One good does not necessarily drive out

(*Continued on page 744*)

Stray Sheep

By FLORENCE S. EDSALL

OF all the straggling flocks that browse tonight
Upon the quiet pastures of the mind,
How many will elude wise Sheep-dog Sleep,
Refuse to jump the fence, and lag behind?

How many will escape old Shepherd Time
Who leans upon his crook and counts his lambs,—
The wobbly-legged, sweet-eyed, hungry young,
The anxious ewes, the brooding sullen rams?

A few stray sheep, perhaps, whose shaggy backs
Have matted in black wool the burrs of night,—
Those purple thistle-tops of sky and mist.
Their bells ring sweetly from some far off height.

Elinor Wylie's Poetry*

By LOUIS UNTERMEYER

THE work of no poet—certainly no contemporary poet—has marched forward so quickly and to so radiant a climax as the work of Elinor Wylie. That work was divided, with a scrupulous balance, between prose and poetry—four books each—a balance determined by a severe sense of domestic economy. Yet it is no secret that Elinor Wylie never venerated but rather resented the creative energy which was spent on her novels. Much though I admire the fine-spun filigree of "Jennifer Lorn" and the exquisite diablerie of "The Venetian Glass Nephew," I must differ from James Branch Cabell's high estimate and rate these less than the last sonnet sequence or even such a single lyric as "Hymn to Earth." It is, I believe, the poetry which will endure longest and it is with the poetry that I propose to deal.

The distinctively designed, chastely printed "Collected Poems"—the format of which no one would have appreciated more than the poet herself—embodies Elinor Wylie's four books of poems ("Nets to Catch the Wind," "Black Armour," "Trivial Breath," "Angels and Earthly Creatures") in the order and arrangement in which they originally appeared, as well as a section of forty-eight poems hitherto uncollected in book form. Some of the posthumous verses have never seen print; others, rescued from weekly periodical columns—notably "The Pebble," "Golden Bough," "The Persian Kitten"—may well be ranked among the poet's ripest and most personal utterances. Nor can any reader be anything but grateful to the editor for being presented with many pieces left in manuscript, particularly for "The Madwoman's Miracle," "Peregrine's Sunday Song," the amazing "Unfinished Ballad," which is like a fierce vision flowing through a trance, and the noble "Birthday Sonnet" which brings the book to its proper close.

But the growth of Elinor Wylie—a growth that was more like a sudden series of ascents—is best observed by a study of four books in chronological sequence. When one remembers that all her volumes of poetry (with the exception of an early, anonymous, and unprocurable booklet) were issued within eight years—none of them before she was in her early thirties—the nature of her growing importance becomes clear. She was progressively schooled by her craft, by her mind, and by her spirit. That, in the beginning, the craft came first is obvious throughout "Nets to Catch the Wind." No first book of our time has exhibited a technique so dazzling, so firm, and fine-cut. The line is almost too keen; the glitter too persistent. Even at the outset the poet's preoccupation with silver, snow, crystal, pearly monotones found expression in a group of practically perfect poems which have embellished the anthologies: "Wild Peaches," "Sea Lullaby," "Incantation," and the magical "Velvet Shoes." Even so early a sonnet as "August" shows complete fulfilment of the design:

> Why should this Negro insolently stride
> Down the red noonday on such noiseless feet?
> Piled in his barrow, tawnier than wheat,
> Lie heaps of smouldering daisies, sombre-eyed,
> Their copper petals shrivelled up with pride,
> Hot with a superfluity of heat,
> Like a great brazier borne along the street
> By captive leopards, black and burning pied.
>
> Are there no water-lilies, smooth as cream,
> With long stems dripping crystal? Are there none
> Like those white lilies, luminous and cool,
> Plucked from some hemlock-darkened northern stream
> By fair-haired swimmers, diving where the sun
> Scarce warms the surface of the deepest pool?

How simply, and yet superbly, the visual and tactile values are here combined. How overpoweringly the effect of heat is sustained:—the choice of the Negro as a tropic image, the "red" noonday, the "smouldering" daisies, the barrow like "a great brazier," the leopards (repeating the tropic note) "burning pied"—and this effect intensified by the shock of the cool sestet with its startling contrast by way of a question: "Are there no water lilies . . . with long stems dripping crystal?"

In "Black Armour," although no less a craftsman, she is more concerned with what she has to say than with the manner of saying. An intelligence, fastidious and even finicking, commands the utterance. The material is integrated by a mind seriously at work and (as in "Peregrine") at play. Here, in "Let No Charitable Hope," "This Hand," "Sequence," and others, is amplified that sensitive strain which, suggested by Donne and Webster, she was to make so curiously and completely her own. Here, too, are the first of those self-portraits which Mrs. Wylie drew from time to time, metaphysically in "Nebuchadnezzar," faintly disguised in "Pere-

* The Collected Poems of Elinor Wylie. With an introduction by William Rose Benét. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1932. $3.50.

This Week

"THE ESSENTIAL SHAKESPEARE."
Reviewed by TUCKER BROOKE.
"SACRED AND PROFANE MEMORIES."
Reviewed by LEE WILSON DODD.
"SIR BILLY HOWE."
Reviewed by HAROLD MURDOCK.
"THE NAVY, DEFENSE OR PORTENT?"
Reviewed by OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD.
"THE FROZEN FOUNTAIN."
Reviewed by FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT.
"AND NOW GOODBYE."
Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD.
"SOVIET RIVER."
Reviewed by ARTHUR RUHL.
"SAINTS AND SINNERS."
Reviewed by ERNEST SUTHERLAND BATES.
HUMAN BEING.
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.
BOOKS AS DUES.
By HAROLD PULSIFER.

Next Week, or Later

"SCIENCE AND HUMAN EXPERIENCE."
Reviewed by F. L. C. NORTHROP.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

grine," strangely altered in "A Red Carpet for Shelley," ironically mocking and disarming in "Portrait in Black Paint." But conflict is also announced here, conflict between "the jewelled brain" and the austere soul.

In "Trivial Breath" the struggle is continued. The craftsman still delights to spin a poem with the most tenuous of intellectual threads—a prime example being "Malediction upon Myself"—but it is the craftsman in transition. No one can read "Confession of Faith," "Peter and John," or the suppler "Desolation is a Delicate Thing" without the quickened pulse and

AN EARLY PORTRAIT OF ELINOR WYLIE.

the caught breath which are the only true announcers of pure poetry. Some of the edge has gone; the pace is slower, the music mellower and more variable. Although the poet has lost none of her finesse, the poem no longer needs the emphasis of the clinched couplet and the uncannily tightened line.

"Angels and Earthly Creatures" is not merely a summation of Elinor Wylie's : a translation of them. What was ıt and rapid-growing talent is now with the steady glow of genius; ... d, precise and patrician, has become dependent on the common divinity of spirit. There is scarcely a page that does not shed illumination as casually as a rich nature sheds wisdom; in these last works, greatness has found its certain utterance. A deeper vibration that we usually encounter, a larger-sweeping tone, rises from such poems as "O Virtuous Light," "This Corruptible," in which the dialectic is lifted into drama, "Chimæra Sleeping," "Absent Thee From Felicity Awhile," with its moving undercurrent, and the unforgettable organ-music of "Hymn to Earth," that noble valedictory, from which I sever the first stanza:

Farewell, incomparable element,
Whence man arose, where he shall not return;
And hail, imperfect urn
Of his last ashes, and his firstborn fruit;
Farewell, the long pursuit,
And all the adventures of his discontent;
The voyages which sent
His heart averse from home:
Metal of clay, permit him that he come
To thy slow-burning fire as to a hearth;
Accept him as a particle of earth.

I have already referred with admiration to one or two of the sonnets, but those written toward the end of her life surpass the earlier ones to such an extent that we must rank Elinor Wylie unreservedly among the greatest sonneteers of our time. "One Person," that set of nineteen, is so passionately integrated that it makes the contemporary sonnet sequence seem studiously forced and mechanical. "Little Sonnet," "Pretty Words," and "Non Disputandum" are three others which, in their very variety, show the uncommon uses to which she could put the form. But if only one were to be quoted to prove Elinor Wylie's masterly employment of this key to unlock the heart it might well be the concluding elegiac "Birthday Sonnet":

Take home Thy prodigal child, O Lord of Hosts!
Protect the sacred from the secular danger;
Advise her, that Thou never needst avenge her;
Marry her mind neither to man's nor ghost's
Nor holier domination's, if the costs
Of such commingling should transport or change her;
Defend her from familiar and stranger
And earth's and air's contagions and rusts.
Instruct her strictly to preserve Thy gift
And alter not its grain in atom sort;
Angels may wed her to their ultimate hurt
And men embrace a spectre in a shift
So that no drop of the pure spirit fall
Into the dust: defend Thy prodigal.

Much could be said, much will be written of the many shapes her verses assumed, the success with which she added "modern" devices to traditional structures, the fine judgment which allowed her to season her dulcet melodies with occasional dissonances but not to drown consonance in cacophony, the subtle ear which delighted in such suspended rhymes as "plumage"-"image," "haunches"-"inches," "simple"-"trample," "cathedral" - "federal," "pastured" - "investured." These matters will be enlarged upon by the student and technician; they will provoke many a thesis during the next decade. Meanwhile, here are more than three hundred pages ranging from brilliant artifice to uplifted art. To say no page is dull or undistinguished is true but it is not true enough. A summary as condensed as this will have to confess its own inadequacy. Many, perhaps most, of these three hundred pages will die. But some of the quietest seem destined for a far longer life than all but a few of their louder contemporaries'. No less than a dozen of these poems—possibly a score—will survive, poems that helped change the renaissance of American poetry from an era of propaganda to a richly performed accomplishment. If poetry, the final authority, has a voice for all to recognize, its accent is unmistakable in this last book by Elinor Wylie.

A Spectacular Career

SILVER DOLLAR: The Story of the Tabors. By DAVID KARSNER. New York: Covici, Friede. 1932. $3.

Reviewed by EDWIN L. SABIN

THIS chronicle is built around the career, which closed in 1899, of H. A. W. Tabor, Horace Tabor, "Haw" Tabor, who for fifteen years was a spectacular figure in the mining, financial, and political annals of the Colorado West, and was no less spectacular in his miserable downfall.

It is necessarily a history of the rise and fall, also, of the great silver camp of Leadville, where "lucky" Tabor, a mining camp storekeeper, made a profligate fortune without sinking a pick; and of a Denver taking on the metropolitan airs of full-dress functions and five-story buildings promoted by the Tabor millions. Moreover, it is a story national in its scope. Names greater than that of Horace Tabor are associated with it, and the march of the drama extends from the Rockies to Washington.

During his Denver days the present reviewer heard much of Horace Tabor from the old-timers. Indeed it is impossible for even the casual sojourner there to be unconscious of the Tabor name. The Tabor Block and the Tabor Grand Opera House, not so very old save in civic progress, still stand, and enterprises which he fostered have long outlived him. Those two windows of a second story room down Sixteenth Street used to be pointed out as marking one of his lodgings in his latter days when he was borrowing quarters from his friends. And the tale is to be told of that "grand reception" given by him and his new bride in their freshly furnished apartments, where Mrs. Tabor's pink silk pajamas displayed upon the footboard of the ornate mahogany bedstead set Denver eyes agog.

Tabor, Maine born, a Kansas Free Soiler, fated to be worth, in pocket and on paper, $10,000,000; to be a short-term Senator from Colorado and a Colorado lieutenant governor, to erect monuments to himself, to wear a lace-bedecked nightshirt with gold buttons, to see his name engraved upon stone archways and gold and silver plates, and to eke out his last days through the bounty of old friends, came from Kansas to the Colorado gold fields in the Pike's Peak Rush in 1859. He revealed himself as a hearty, full-blooded, free-handed, determined, likable but vulgar and uneducated man, with prospecting as only a side issue. A man of destiny, he was too lazy—smartly lazy—for harder work than that of a storekeeper following in the wake of the various mining strikes.

When the enormous silver deposits on Freyer Hill, at Oro, the future Leadville, of California Gulch, were discovered in 1878, Tabor, the affluent storekeeper, grub-staked the two Germans, Hook and Rische, in the sum of $64.75; they developed their discovery claim, the Little Pittsburgh, and in five months took out thousands of dollars, of which a third went to Tabor. Hook sold to Rische and Tabor for $98,000; two months later Hook sold his half interest to David Moffat, Denver capitalist and mountain railroad builder, for $262,000.

Marshall Field of Chicago had sent "lucky" Horace Tabor $500 to be invested in some promising mining property. With this and $500 of his own Tabor bought the Chrysolite claim of a tramp prospector, Chicken Bill. Chicken Bill had liberally "salted" this claim from the Pittsburgh itself! Haw Tabor good-naturedly laughed. This barren Chrysolite opened up to a bonanza vein of silver and the Tabor profits from his two mining investments rose to $100,000 a month! He sold his share in the $1,000 Chrysolite for $500,000; Marshall Field his for $700,000.

Through buying, at first thrifty but haphazard and then prodigal, and developing, selling, and buying again, the Tabor millions mounted. Nothing seemed out of hail-fellow Haw Tabor's reach. Inspired by his egregious egotism and unlimited cheek, and vain of his capability for showy spending, he had only to climb his gold and silver ladder. He entered politics. Moving down to Denver he threw away his Puritan-minded but good and faithful wife Augusta (who knew him better than he did), of the old days, in order to take on buxom "Baby Doe" of fleshly parts but of mining-camp reputation somewhat light. For this performance his better friends never pardoned him. He was formally married to "Baby Doe" in Washington, where at the wedding reception the Senator groom clapped President Arthur upon the back.

A benefactor to his state, nevertheless he reaped of his follies. Cleveland came in on a gold ticket. The repeal of the Sherman Silver Act reduced silver from around $1.29 an ounce to fifty cents and also reduced ex-Senator, ex-Lieutenant Governor, and millionaire magnate Haw Tabor from his high estate. The election of McKinley over Bryan flattened him completely. In twelve years he had spent $12,000,000 not mainly in securities but largely upon flagrant extravagances, pretentious gambles, and catch-all swindles. He had been an easy mark. And having at last been floated again by the gift of the postmastership of Denver, he died.

Upon the other hand, there in California Gulch had labored the gray-haired Meyer Guggenheim, head of the house of Guggenheim, until from his Minnie Mine, once despised by Tabor, he was taking out his $100,000 a month net—foundation of the Guggenheim future enterprises; Tom Walsh, the royal entertainer, great mining man, and father-in-law of Edward B. McLean, Washington newspaper publisher and sportsman, was owner of the Grand Hotel in Leadville's palmy days; Samuel Newhouse the copper prince, builder of the Flatiron Building in New York City, and large investor in Salt Lake realty, made his strike at Leadville; Marshall Field, David Moffat, Alvah Adams, three times governor of Colorado, and other national figures, in a way are products of the Leadville bonanzas. But now, of the jovial, back-slapping, glass enjoying, high riding, and shallow principled Haw Tabor's assets, there is left in the Tabor name only that Matchless Mine which had paid him $80,000 a month and which, when his rocket plunged to earth, was not worth liquidating. As an example of sudden wealth for the wise and for the foolish this potent Freyer Hill of California Gulch was another Comstock Lode.

The closing fifty pages of Mr. Karsner's well-written book are devoted to Silver Dollar, Tabor's daughter, as christened by a flowery allusion of the silver-tongued Bryan—that Silver Dollar who after a spasmodic flight in prose and poetry drank the dregs of Chicago's Tenderloin District, and by her tragic death there in September, 1922, filled far more newspaper space than she ever had, in life.

A Credible Shakespeare

THE ESSENTIAL SHAKESPEARE: A Biographical Adventure. By J. DOVER WILSON. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (Macmillan). 1932. $1.50.

Reviewed by TUCKER BROOKE

EVERY one who reads Shakespeare would do well to read also this little book about the poet's personality. Since the late Sir Walter Raleigh published his brilliant monograph in the English Men of Letters Series, I think no one has succeeded so well—within comparable limits at least—in plucking out the heart of Shakespeare's mystery; that is, in reducing to succinct and memorable phrases a view of Shakespeare's character and career which seems credible in the light of his achievement. Professor Dover Wilson has compacted into a hundred and fifty pages a remarkable amount of background, and — which is much better—a half-dozen original interpretations that vivify the picture and seem to me generally as just as they are ingenious and finely worded.

The impression of the poet which Professor Dover Wilson builds up is essentially more youthful, patrician, and subjective than the composite photograph idea that people carry away from the usual manuals. Admitting that we really

THE GRAFTON SHAKESPEARE.

know little of Shakespeare's life before he was thirty, he invites us to contemplate him as he was at that time, when

> the curtain is drawn aside to discover him already at the height of fame and prosperity; as a leading actor in the leading company in England, as a member of the most brilliant of court circles, as a poet whose publications were more sought after than those of any contemporary, and as a dramatist of such acknowledged power that one of the best-known dramatists of the day is found advising his fellow-playwrights to give up trying to compete with him. Surely there is no more dramatic entry in the whole of history than this of history's greatest dramatist.

Of the first act in his professional career we are mainly ignorant, "but," he says shrewdly, "it is legitimate to suppose that there was a first act, since, when we find a man of thirty already near the top of his particular tree, we must assume some previous climbing." Mr. Dover Wilson's guess is that Shakespeare was already an actor before his marriage at eighteen, and he ventures to correlate the births of his three children with the probable returns of the actor-fiancé or husband to Stratford during the summer tours of his company.

"Enter William Shakespeare with Divers of Worship" is the caption of one chapter; and Mr. Dover Wilson stresses the intimate connection of Shakespeare's early poems and comedies with the young nobles of London: burghers and plebeians counted for little among his readers or audiences. Behind Ferdinand, King of Navarre, and the three lords in "Love's Labour's Lost" Mr. Wilson sees something like special embodiments of Ferdinando Stanley, Lord Derby (and King in Man), and his friends, the Earls of Essex, Rut-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

land, and Southampton. Essex's personality and fate he thinks the paramount factors in Shakespeare's turn from comedy to tragedy. "Henry V," which of course mentions Essex, was written to admonish him: "Henry V is not of course . . . a portrait of Essex; he was created as an appeal to Essex to become that kind of man, to perform that kind of work for England." "Hamlet" is a study of Essex.

> Essex in Ireland during 1599, frittering away a summer and an army; when forced to act, debating whether to march on Elizabeth or Tyrone; and lastly, having signed the ignominious truce, suddenly posting to England and dashing into the Queen's bedroom, behaves exactly as Hamlet would have acted under the same conditions. Hamlet, unable to accomplish his design, . . . and yet always ready to act upon impulse . . . simply acts as Essex would have acted had he lived at Elsinore.

The break-up of the young-patrician, paradisiacal type of life, when Essex ruined himself and his friends, ended Shakespeare's youth: "He one day discovered that life and tragedy were the same." For a time he desisted from writing, or expressed his nausea in plays like "Troilus" and "Measure for Measure." Then he struggled over what Mr. Dover Wilson calls in mountaineering phrase the "razor edge" of tragedy, most terrifying in "Lear," and by gradual degrees, through the later Roman plays, to the serenity of the romances. Professor Dover Wilson accepts from Sir Edmund Chambers the word "conversion" to characterize the change to the mental outlook of the last comedies, but he denies that the conversion was religious or that it accompanied a weakening of mind and body. "The Tempest," he asserts, "was not written by a sick man." Rather, he thinks, Shakespeare underwent a Wordsworthian moral purging in the Stratford countryside; and he draws cleverly, if rather too daringly, upon the "Prelude" and the "Tintern Abbey" verses for his view of Shakespeare's last stage. Not a worn-out body, he concludes, but some epidemic, cut the poet off at fifty-two.

It is a vivid and attractive portrait that Mr. Dover Wilson draws, and though it does not pretend to be at all points authenticated, it at least explains well the emotional lights and shadows in the plays. It justifies, I think, the final sentence of the author's preface: "I might perhaps have called it 'A credible Shakespeare.'"

Tucker Brooke, professor in English at Yale University, is general editor of the Yale Shakespeare and the author among other works of "The Shakespeare Apocrypha" and "Shakespeare's Plutarch."

The Years of Our Past

SACRED AND PROFANE MEMORIES. By CARL VAN VECHTEN. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1932. $3.

Reviewed by LEE WILSON DODD

IT is a pleasure to read Carl Van Vechten's "Sacred And Profane Memories" because, while they are slight and fragmentary, they are written with a delicacy and charm that only now and then crosses the invisible line separating what is precious from what is a little too precious, from what—in a word—is definitely *baroque*. There is in all Mr. Van Vechten's writing a faint nostalgic awareness of the Naughty 'Nineties, the Mauve Decade period of his formative boyhood, as it was indeed of mine. Perhaps this is why I feel a special sympathy for his preoccupation with style—and why I am also just a little on guard when I read him. It is so easy to be seduced by echoes of what pleased us most when we were young. *The Yellow Book* was not, after all, the soundest of models for young and sensitive literary minds.

Perhaps the one entirely perfect page in this agreeable volume is occupied by a photograph of Grandmother Van Vechten, taken by the author himself. Here, certainly, is a sound, sober, and beautiful work of art.

> I can still see her [writes Mr. Van Vechten] as she used to sit, hour after hour, silently with folded arms in the bow-window of her room on the second story of my uncle's white brick house. Her strong will kept her alive. I photographed her sitting in her window very much in the same attitude as that in which Whistler painted his mother, but at the time I made the photograph I had not even seen a reproduction of the picture. Whistler knew that old women sit thus grimly waiting for the end, but never welcoming it, and that feeling is in my photograph. . . .

It is; and the pattern of light and shade is extraordinarily successful, emphasizing (not too obtrusively) the collected tension of the old figure, a brooding Sybil impatient of the slow, cumulative indignities of Time.

I confess myself to a preference for the sacred memories in this somewhat casual scrap-book, memories drawn from the "tin trunk" in the attic of Mr. Van Vechten's boyhood home. Iowa was—perhaps not unhappily in all respects—a long way from Paris. "The 'eighties and 'nineties," writes Mr. Van Vechten, "the years of my boyhood, were passed far away from Jules Laforgue and César Franck, Erik Satie, Stéphane Mallarmé, Paul Verlaine, Oscar Wilde, and Aubrey Beardsley." He read *St. Nicholas* and the tales of Frank Stockton, and my heart leaped up at his confession that "The Bee-man of Orn and The Floating Prince occupy very important positions in my library." Alas, when my own children had come to the right age for them, I could no longer find them in mine! They had dropped away with so much else that I fondly suppose I own until the moment comes to recover it.

GENERAL HOWE AND MISS ———, A CARICATURE BY THOMAS ROWLANDSON.
From "A History of Caricature," by BOHUN LYNCH (Little, Brown)

This is one of the minor tragedies of existence.

It is the special charm for me of Mr. Van Vechten's book that he recovers his past so quietly, winningly, and with so unaffected a piety—in the good Roman sense of that injured word. In the year 2000, what sacred memories will the terrace-perchers of New Babylon be printing, I wonder? As for the profane memories, they are amusing enough; and I particularly recommend the brief account of "La Tigresse"—which I can only refer to in the words of an old teacher of mine as "a gem of gems."

"Sacred and Profane Memories" may not be an important book—but, on the other hand, it so easily *may;* for what, after all, in literature, is finally more important and lasting (may I mention "A Sentimental Journey"?) than charm?

After prolonged negotiations, the famous Borghese Archives have passed from the princely family of that name to the Vatican Library. The Borghese Archives include many letters from kings long dead, secret papers of great historical interest, and the history of Latium, which the Borgheses once practically owned and where they dispensed justice. A fine collection of old maps of the Roman Campagna is also a valuable acquisition.

In his review of "Amber Satyr" in the May 14 issue of *The Saturday Review,* Mr. Brickell inadvertently referred to Ray Flannagan, its author, as the author of "Seven Days' Whipping." That volume was the work of John Biggs, Jr. Mr. Flannagan's book was entitled "The Whipping."

Scarlet and Gold

SIR BILLY HOWE. By BELLAMY PARTRIDGE. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1932. $3.50.

Reviewed by HAROLD MURDOCK

WHEN Mr. Partridge decided to present Sir William Howe to the public as "Sir Billy" he warned his readers of what they might expect. The publisher's jacket carries the General's portrait, but the rest of the decoration consists of a decanter, a glass, and a pipe, seductively grouped upon a wine-colored ground. An experienced journalist, the author employs a jaunty style that abounds in smart quips and familiar colloquialisms. As a story writer, he does not find it easy to ignore picturesque tradition or to stress prosaic facts that do not invite imaginative embellishment. He is in sportive mood, and partisanship is not in him. He is frankly amused by Howe's "dining and winning" (wining?), his "gaming and daming." He is not overawed by the General's rank, by his towering stature, or by the swarthy physiognomy before which his subordinates quailed. He has no more reverence for our sainted national heroes than for the high-born gentleman in scarlet and gold. He is on the lookout for fun, and finds it in surprising places. This sort of thing can hardly be called serious biography, and yet there is new material here, and the inferences that the author draws from it are usually sound. The book reads easily, and the man on the street should find it not only amusing but informative.

The author pays little attention to Howe's career before or after the war, and when we reach the second chapter we find the General in the midst of the carnage of Bunker Hill. That inaccuracies should occur in a popular narrative of this sort is not surprising, and they may be regarded as immaterial save where they concern the career or character of the hero. It is hard to understand, for instance, the author's charge that Howe killed an excellent plan of action that had been proposed by Clinton for the conquest of Breed's Hill. Now, Clinton had a plan on the 17th of June, and a good one, but surely it was Gage who vetoed it. The day's operations were decided in council, and Burgoyne leaves us to infer that Clinton, Howe, and himself were of one mind on that occasion. The motive ascribed by the author to Howe for his alleged action is based upon an ancient inference and seems equally untenable. He contends that Howe was anxious to stage a military pageant on the Charlestown hills within sight of the thousands who crowded the windows and housetops of Boston, and by executing a frontal attack to convince the doubting that British troops were invincible in the field. But it now seems clear that when Howe crossed the Charles he had no idea of making a frontal attack, and that he chose the landing place so that by following along the shore of the Mystic, he might gain the rear of the redoubt. It was the unexpected and hasty construction of the rail-fence line by the men from New Hampshire that made the trouble, and even when the line had been established, Howe attempted to turn it by a stealthy march under the bank and along the beach of the river. When this manoeuvre failed, he had the choice either of retreating to his boats or of making a frontal attack.

If Howe does not emerge from the book a vivid figure, we should remember that he does not lend himself easily to portraiture. His dissipations are possibly overstressed, but we find here for the first time all the evidence and gossip concerning the activities and influence of the celebrated Mrs. Loring. She is the heroine of the book, "a flashing blonde," to whom Howe pays open and scandalous court, stirring the wrath, we are told, of ambitious mamas and the jealousy of silly daughters, particularly during the luxurious winter that the army spent in Philadelphia. The inception and development of the feuds between Howe and Clinton and their influence upon the conduct of the war are clearly recited, and the author's finding that Howe acted as a political soldier bent upon the achievement of peace without victory, is doubtless the only reasonable solution of a mystery of long standing. Howe furnished the opportunities, and Washington improved them to found a new nation.

Harold Murdock is the author among other works of "The Nineteenth of April, 1775" and "Earl Percy Dines Abroad."

Our Navy

THE NAVY: DEFENSE OR PORTENT? By CHARLES A. BEARD. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1932.

Reviewed by OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

THIS is a most important little book, for it is both a challenge to and an indictment of the Navy, the admirals that control it and pose as the experts who are alone competent to advise the country as to its naval policy, and the members of Congress who, year after year, vote the great appropriations which keep the navy alive. Every Senator and Congressman ought to be compelled to read it, and the Navy Department and its chief admirals should be officially compelled to reply to it—if they can. Here is the whole navy record of recent years in brief and in miniature. Here is the story of Charles M. Schwab's foisting of rotten armor-plates upon the government and his fining therefore by President Cleveland, and the simple truth from his own lips of the activities of William B. Shearer, the paid propagandist of the interested shipbuilders—who never took the trouble to look up his more than dubious record—and the pet of the navy crowd who egged him on to do his best to wreck the Geneva Arms Conference. And most important of all, here is the most convincing proof of the utter lack of sound intelligence among the highest-ranking officers in the American navy. How, after perusing this evidence—again out of their own mouths—which Professor Beard has assembled, any committee of Congress should waste time hearing naval officers is beyond us.

If these seem extreme words, a perusal of this volume will prove their restraint. Take the most striking example of naval stupidity—to apply the politest possible word. Here is the testimony of Rear-Admiral George H. Rock, Chief of the Bureau of Construction and Repair, on April 17, 1930, before the Committee on Naval Affairs of the House of Representatives:

> *Mr. McClintic.* How many battleships did we use in the World War?
> *Admiral Rock.* We were ready to use all of them.
> *Mr. McClintic.* Did we fire a single shot from a battleship?
> *Admiral Rock.* I think you are getting out of the line of my specialty. I am not a seagoing officer.
> *Mr. McClintic.* It is true that they did not fire a single shot in that war. Is it not true that most of them were put away in reserve?
> *Admiral Rock.* There was no naval engagement on this side, but there were a good many shots fired during the last war on the other side.
> *Mr. McClintic.* We could have sent some battleships over there.
> *Admiral Rock.* We did send some.
> *Mr. McClintic.* Battleships?
> *Admiral Rock.* Yes, sir.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mr. McClintic. Where were they? Did they participate in any battle?

Admiral Rock. They were in the Grand Fleet, but whether they were in the battle of Jutland, I do not remember.

Now when it is recalled that the battle of Jutland was fought *one year before* the United States entered the war and that any child knows that, the measure of Admiral Rock's intelligence and memory is clear.

Nor is this an extreme and exceptional case. Professor Beard shows how Admiral Hilary P. Jones, so often a delegate to naval conferences, testified in 1930 that he thought the right to build three more cruisers armed with eight-inch guns was "vital" to the safety of the American people. As soon as he said that Senator Reed, of Pennsylvania, produced a letter Jones had written a year before proving that when "two units come within range of gun fire control in view of the much greater rapidity of fire of the six-inch gun," the advantage at long range of the eight-inch gun "rapidly disappears"—yet the three eight-inch cruisers he testified were essential to the safety of the Republic!

Even so excellent a diplomat as Rear-Admiral Bristol made a spectacle of himself. He was opposed to the London Pact and was for the eight-inch cruisers. Said he: "I think I could show you, if I told you how we expected to use these cruisers in case of difficulties, so you could see very quickly it is not a question of numbers of six-inch guns. It is a question of a thing that you want to use for a given purpose"—hence America's safety is staked on those three cruisers. Admiral Pratt had previously put it thus:

> The eight-inch gun is a corker where you have clear weather and high visibility, but much of the time you have fog and all sorts of trouble, perhaps, ahead of you, and under those circumstances I would prefer the six-inch gun to the eight-inch gun, but if you can see 50,000 yards, as you can out on the Pacific coast these fine days, the eight-inch gun would be preferred to the six-inch gun.

Admiral Chase, qualified as an expert, being an admiral, also opposed the London Pact, which has so ignobly sacrificed American safety. When questioned, he admitted that he had never been at sea on an eight-inch cruiser, that he had never seen one at target practice. He knew, however, he said, how thick the armor on turrets is. Cruelly, Senator Reed at once asked him the thickness of the turret armor on the Salt Lake City class of cruisers (our latest and fastest). "I do not recall the exact thickness now, sir," the Admiral replied!

Lest anyone think that those are recent developments, the reviewer sat in a meeting of the House Naval Committee in 1915 when Rear-Admiral W. W. Kimball, commanding all our submarines, demanded and got from that incredible committee authority to build a lot of new submarines larger than ever before built. When asked why we needed them he said the Germans were building them that size. When pressed for the source of his knowledge he produced a statement made by a sixteen-year-old American boy who had been impressed on one of these boats for a brief cruise. On the strength of that boy's story and two photographs of the deck of that ship, the United States changed the entire submarine policy! Admiral Kimball wanted the room cleared because his information was so confidential, but he actually gave the Committee no more information than had already appeared in the New York *World* which also printed one of the photographs. Yet the Committee, because Admiral Kimball was our great "expert," gave him what he wanted.

It is all one of the greatest American humbugs—the whole navy business—and one of our greatest rackets. Every naval officer knows that as bad weather conditions robbed the British of a victory at Jutland, so bad conditions at sea could make useless any American combination against another fleet and *vice versa*. Admiral Pratt's testimony confirms that: "Much of the time you have fog and all sorts of trouble." A heavy sea and all sorts of trouble enabled the Germans to win a much easier victory at Coronel than otherwise would have been the case. The battle of the Marne was lost to the Germans by the error of a single German General-Staff officer, and Napoleon lost Waterloo because one of his marshals was too late. There is nothing in all the world so impossible as to guarantee a nation's security by naval or military preparedness. Calvin Coolidge knows that for he told the American Legion that no amount of preparedness ever kept a country out of war or insured its victory after it got in.

Meanwhile we have created a privileged class of naval men of inferior mentality who, contrary to our whole American traditions and policy, seek to impose their will upon us as to armaments when for the first hundred years of our national life we had practically no navy and remained entirely safe. Behind them functions a most dangerous group of interested shipbuilders and supply men and Navy Leagues and patriotic associations which, parrotlike, merely repeat slogans and never make an honest intellectual study of the whole question.

No, Professor Beard, the navy is neither a defense nor a portent today. As it exists, and with the propagandists behind it, it is a heavily entrenched menace to the American people and to their liberties.

A Treatise on Ornament

THE FROZEN FOUNTAIN. By CLAUDE BRAGDON. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1932. $3.75.

Reviewed by FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

THIS book is, principally, a treatise on ornament as an abstract element—something in itself, which, of course, it may be, as snow or mineral crystals are. Or as Louis Sullivan's system of ornament was. But Louis Sullivan devised a system of ornament out of himself with a sense of organic unity warmly exponent of the individuality of one Louis Henry Sullivan.

Mr. Bragdon devises a formula, or a system for devising geometrical patterns, which is not the same thing and in which there is very little room for Mr. Bragdon's individuality or anyone's.

That may be a virtue as things are with us. At any rate Claude Bragdon, necromancer, has well written another entertaining book. It is a beautiful book and if the author could letter the drawings as well as he draws, the draughtmanship of the work would be faultless.

In this affair of cutting out the head of the drum to see where the sound comes from C. B. is an enthusiast with no equal.

And, be it said, although he doesn't find out where the sound comes from he does discover all sorts of curious and interesting things on the inside wall of the drum and excites more speculation as to what became of the sound when the head of the drum was cut out.

But this is the fate of all attempts to especially adapt geo-astro-labery to incidental façades and effect coincidences with the features of building elevations.

Such coincidences can only bore one who has dealt directly with proportion and gone into it directly enough to know that great buildings never happened that way. Proportion is nothing in itself but is a matter of relation to environment modified always by every feature—exterior as well as interior. Le Corbusier, hard as nails and sane as a hammer up to this point, goes as superstitious as a milkmaid lost in the mist of a moonlit night.

But in meticulous, abstract, geometrical analysis there will always be a fascinating room for the astrological, geometrical mind. And sometimes the long arm of coincidence will find a pretty circumstance in its hands. I should say the laws lie deeper and in the realm of relativity. Were the abstract so easily made I should distrust the validity of the laws.

But Claude Bragdon and I have much in common in this book because he came as a visitor and friend to sit reverently at the feet of my old master Louis Sullivan. I first met him there. And the master's worth can not be exaggerated for me by his lively sense of gratitude. Nor do I resent his tying me so closely to the master's side, refusing to let me stray. Though in regard to Louis Sullivan's direct European influence he is mistaken. European reactions were not Sullivanan, but by way of the straight line and flat plane as abstractions—with which Louis Sullivan did nothing. Mr. Sullivan, himself, has said that I was his apprentice but never his disciple. This last sentence as against the Bragdon reference to me as Sullivan's disciple.

And I think C. B., as his disciple, applies to him more of the fourth dimension than necessary if he will take the simple third we now have and give it spiritual interpretation. That is to say, take "thickness" and see it as depth.

Architectural depths are seldom if ever plumbed by geometrical devices. Certainly not Louis Sullivan's. They were too human.

Coming to the concrete analysis of architecture there is much sense in this book. Some wisdom. But I cannot agree with the Bragdon category of "Significant, Dramatic, Organic."

Were a building genuinely organic the word "significant" might be forgotten and the word "dramatic" be forgiven. Because the term "organic" implies the others as the term manhood implies health and beauty.

He adds "ecstatic" for good measure. Dangerous—because this is not a quality of a building but of the beholder.

It is characteristic of him, however, because he characterizes a building as a "frozen fountain," going back to agree with Ruskin's "frozen music," I suppose. A term Ruskin successfully applied to Gothic architecture.

But the Bragdon simile would be much more true were it applied to the sources of creative inspiration that build the building. Fountains they certainly are and, unhappily, frozen. They are the only fountains I can connect with the thought of a building: the fountains of creative energy that cultured the building into being. Spires should be less inspiring than depths and breadths of integral character. The superficial skyscraper did not begin our American architecture. The simile of "fountain" applied to the building and "the Chrysler" becomes the ideal building when it is, as are the other skyscrapers, inorganic, utterly.

The buildings that deserve the term "organic" are streamline with the horizon, marrying the features of the terrain, upstanding as the trees. No matter. The danger of any simile is a deadly danger. He is a brave man who makes one.

Notwithstanding these seemingly fundamental disagreements with Mr. Claude Bragdon's thesis—there is much to admire in his book as there is in him. But books call for books.

Frank Lloyd Wright, considered by many the genius of contemporary American architecture, whose work has been characterized in this country as "The New School of the Middle West" and in Europe as "The American Expression in Architecture," is the architect of the Imperial Hotel, Tokio, Japan, and of numerous buildings in the United States. His autobiography was published last month by Longmans, Green & Company.

Who Reads Poetry?

(*Continued from page 741*)

another. Indeed the scientists should be praised for not abdicating. They are the only important body of the intelligent that do hold to a perfectionism, insisting upon knowing their subject without concessions to the easy-going mentality of the masses. They have kept themselves aristocrats, but they, too, are human, and therefore creatures of subtle emotions the best expression of which should be in poetry. They grow arid for lack of it, and their curious blindness to the inutility of science which does not serve (or which destroys) human ends betrays the shallowness of their culture.

It may be argued that the sad falling off in the reading of poetry is due to the schools and colleges which have made poetry a subject of instruction, like Latin or physics, and sped the graduate congratulating himself that he has been dosed with these vitamins and needs no more. Yet, in spite of the amount of thoroughly bad teaching of poetry (for grammar, for morals, for history, for everything but poetry) which exists in even our best institutions, this charge must be held superficial. The failure is in the adult, not the youth, since in other respects he shows himself able to recover from a bad education as often as to profit from a good one.

Nor is it useful to argue that no readable poetry is being written. That is not true (witness, for a recent example, "Conquistador," of Archibald MacLeish), and also irrelevant, for poetry, unlike scientific writing, does not decay, and there is God's own abundance from all ages for the stretching of any eager hand.

No, a class become slack here, and in England and continental Europe also, is letting poetry go. It is the old phenomenon of leaders, unaware of the causes for their leadership, irresistibly attracted by the commonplace, and dropping down into the slackness of the multitude. It may seem an overstatement to count the reading of poetry among the causes of authority. Do not think so. Its decline is a better index than softening muscle, as good an index as a loosening grip on the sources of economic power. For it shows a hardening of the arteries of the mind, and a coarsening of the most human of attributes, a reversal from the power of complexity toward the unregulated existence of the simple, the vulgar, and the crude. Fortunately the tendency is only a generation old among our intellectual leaders. Even a generation ago the magnificent poetry of the English Bible supplied what those who knew no classics and read no other English poetry might have lacked. Yet it is a tendency curving downward with frightful rapidity. The educated man, scarcely aware that he is on the brink of a swift decline, has been letting slip from lazy fingers one of the great sources of emotional and intellectual strength.

Apropos the reading of poetry, an interesting suggestion by Mr. Harold Pulsifer, entitled "Books for Dues," will be found on page 747. Incidentally, the present week has been set aside as Poetry Week.

W. B. Yeats, the celebrated Irish poet, hopes to establish an Irish Academy of Letters in Dublin. He will probably have the support of Bernard Shaw, James Joyce, Liam O'Flaherty, and other Irish men of letters.

A Balanced Ration for a Week's Reading

COLLECTED POEMS OF ELINOR WYLIE. *Knopf.*

The poetical works of one of the most distinguished poets of the present century containing a number of hitherto unpublished poems.

SOVIET RIVER. By LEONID LEONOV. *Dial.*

A novel of Soviet Russia that presents that vast country in its conjunction of old customs and new endeavors.

MEN AND MEMORIES. By SIR WILLIAM ROTHENSTEIN. (*Coward-McCann*).

The second volume of reminiscences of a distinguished artist, covering the first twenty years of the present century.

The Saturday Review
of LITERATURE

HENRY SEIDEL CANBY.....*Editor*
AMY LOVEMAN...*Managing Editor*
WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT
Contributing Editor
CHRISTOPHER MORLEY
Contributing Editor
NOBLE A. CATHCART.....*Publisher*

Published weekly by the Saturday Review Co., Inc., Henry Seidel Canby, President; Roy E. Larsen, Vice-President; Noble A. Cathcart, Secretary-Treasurer, 25 West 45th Street, New York. Subscription rates per year, postpaid, in the U. S. and Mexico, $3.50; in Canada, $5; in Great Britain, 18 shillings; elsewhere $4.50. All business communications should be addressed to 25 West 45th Street, New York. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York. N. Y., under the act of March 1, 1879. Vol. 8. No. 44.

The Saturday Review is indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature."

Copyright, 1932, by the Saturday Review Co., Inc.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Tea and Muffins Fiction

AND NOW GOODBYE. By JAMES HILTON. New York: William Morrow. 1932. $2.50.
FATHERS OF THEIR PEOPLE. By H. W. FREEMAN. New York: Henry Holt & Company. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD

THERE is a class of British creative literature which can be most satisfactorily described as "tea and muffins literature." I do not intend this in a derogatory sense; for there is a certain mood, induced by a well digested tea and the quiet arrival of evening, when the human being is profoundly content with its world; a mood when beauty, nobility, and even tragedy satisfy but do not assail the spirit, unless a mild provocation be called assault; a mood whose counterpart seems to have taken possession of a great deal of really good writing. Mr. Hilton's "And Now Goodbye" is an almost perfect example of the tea and muffins novel—where the impulse to create, whatever color the work it undertakes may assume, springs from a center of peace and well being.

It is the story of a dissenting minister in an English provincial town; a musician and an artist, but not large enough to mind submerging himself in the duties and the odor of his sacred calling. For some time he has been teaching German to the daughter of a local merchant, and when she runs away from home, he is naturally called in to see what can be done about it. He had hardly noticed the girl, he had exchanged no intimacies with her, he had just taught her German; when he follows her to London to try and bring her back, he goes with a feeling of distaste for the job he has been given.

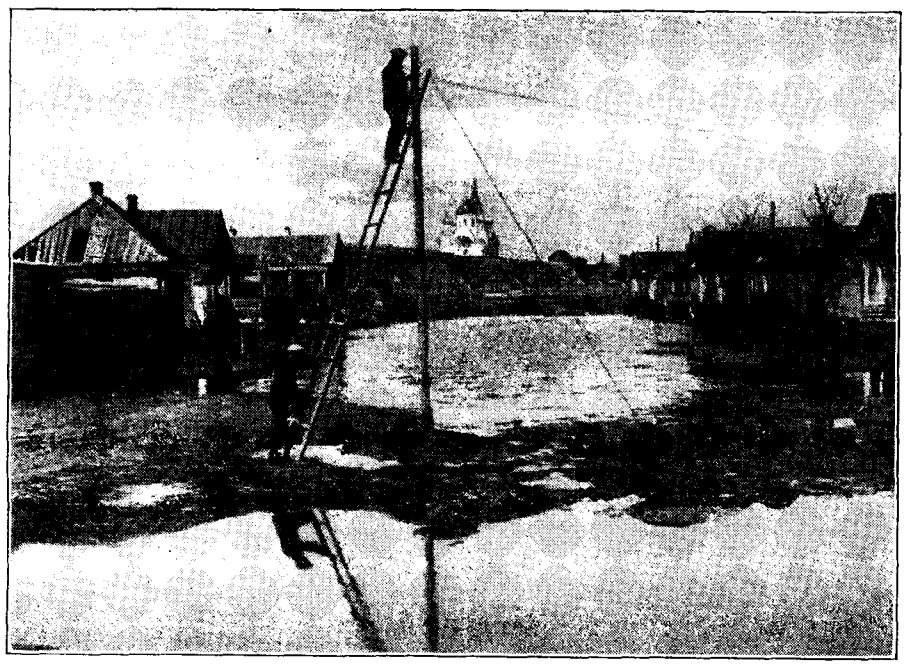
She will not return, she says; she is going to Vienna to study music; and from this point on the reader must find out for himself the entirely convincing steps whereby they discover their love for each other and decide to leave for Vienna together. The next day the train in which they leave London is wrecked; the girl is killed, and her body destroyed in the flames; the minister, when he has recovered from a severe nervous breakdown, goes back to his work. And nobody but a doctor ever learns his secret.

The novel has taken on the shape of a tragedy, but the tragedy lies only in the conclusion, and the conclusion is tragic because there is no other way out. Up to their departure, the minister and the girl are quite adequate to the situation; but when the situation threatens to get beyond their control, and that is where tragedy begins, there is a train wreck to solve it for them. They are not capable of living together in Vienna, or rather the author is not capable of conceiving them under such conditions; by his train wreck he admits, as many would lack the confidence to admit, that there are limits to his invention. And so the book, falling short of tragedy, gives us a pleasant sense of the fitness of things; it is not a sad, but a satisfactory experience. With its provincial background, in depicting which Mr. Hilton's imagination and his local knowledge are beautifully fused, "And Now Goodbye" is one of the most complete performances in English fiction that I have read this year.

There can be no doubt that tea and muffins fiction is, at its best, good fiction; or that the mood in which it is written is, within certain inventive and imaginative limitations, sensitive to almost every degree of tenderness and subtlety. I think that Mr. Freeman's "Fathers of Their People" falls into this class. Mr. Freeman's atmosphere is more pungent and his situation fundamentally less complicated than Mr. Hilton's, so that his book—although it seems to have been created from much the same quiet impulse—shows less evidence of philosophic temper. But in both of them the reader is pleasantly beguiled into the other world of fiction and leaves it with no sense of wasted time.

"Fathers of Their People" is a novel of Suffolk, as it was before the war; it shows how Adam Brundish, in spite of certain drawbacks in temperament and circumstance, comes in the end to be a sort of patriarch of the neighborhood; and how his son, Richard, grew up into manhood. The plot—what little mechanical plot there is—brings Adam and Richard into a quarrel over the girl whom Richard wishes to marry, and reconciles them again when the girl decides that she is too fine a lady to face poverty with a mere farmer's son. This theme is enclosed in a beautifully economical and flowing description of country folk and manners. The novel has none of the fevers or the languors of contemporary English pastoral fiction: it is short; it has no immense genealogies; no costume parade of innumerable minor characters; no witches; no insurmountable dialect. But while it speaks in terms of the actual, of the hard, sweaty life of the soil, there is in almost all the characters something of the large ease of Virgil's Tityrus—*patulæ recubans sub tegmine fagi*—the prototype of the Ideal Rustic. I suppose this confusion of the ideal and the actual to be an unconscious one; but I doubt if we could condemn Mr. Freeman for it. Pre-war pastoral England is somewhat legendary—a few sour years have made it so—and any man who can preserve this legend with such simplicity and restraint and vigor as Mr. Freeman does, deserves all the praise that we can give him.

There are no intimations of struggling genius in either of these writers, but both are artists in storytelling; and if they can give us more novels of this order, we—and the whole body of fiction—should have every reason to be grateful to them.



COLLECTIVIZATION AND ELECTRIFICATION GO HAND IN HAND.
FROM "THE LAND WITHOUT UNEMPLOYMENT" (RUSSIA) IN PICTURES
(INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHERS)

Sotstroy

SOVIET RIVER. By LEONID LEONOV. New York: The Dial Press. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by ARTHUR RUHL

THIS is a novel to be read in Russia itself; on a steamer, in the country, on a long railway journey, anywhere but in the hullaballo and rain of printed words that encompass a place like New York. Endless gray pages of almost type confront you. The picture emerges slowly, like a photographic plate which it might take hours instead of seconds to develop; as "Sotstroy" and all that it stands for, emerges in the book itself.

You begin with an elk drinking in the depths of the Siberian forest, with the silence and wet smell of the virgin woods, the stir and faint tingle of the northern spring. There is a monastery buried up here, and monks, distorted souls driven here by this failure or that—"huge, scurfy mouths, rent by silent screaming"—and a few peasants, hibernating in their smelly dens, like bears.

Into this all but untouched, primeval wilderness, come They—the Revolution, that is to say, the New World—in the shape of a band of Soviet engineers, technicians, clerks, stenographers, and what not, to dam the river and build a wood-pulp plant. They look on the human indigenes as on so many wood animals, on the forest itself as a dressmaker might scan a piece of cloth—we shall slice off this, chew up that. The monks were familiar with all sorts of demons and devils. But the gulf between them and all their old demons wasn't as wide as that which yawned between them and this new, unknown demon, which destroyed the forest and uprooted their ancient world, "whose name was PAPER."

Such, briefly, is the pattern of Leonov's story; the Revolution approached not directly, from its own end, so to say, but from the opposite direction, seen through the eyes of those on its ultimate periphery. "Sotstroy," as the project on the Sot is named in the customary Soviet lingo, gradually takes shape, and along with its growth we follow the human story of its builders, in particular that of one Uvadiev, a "new man," *par excellence;* all for action, hardness, getting ahead with the job, unburdened and unhindered by ancient loyalties and lingering ties with the past.

Gorky, who writes a foreword, finds that Leonov continues the line of the great Russian novelists, as all our own jacketeers find that all newly-translated Russian writers do. If Tolstoy forged his books out of iron, and Turgeniev made his of copper and silver, Leonov, Gorky thinks, works in a very complex alloy of metals. Complex he certainly is; rather hard to read, it seems to me, and at times irritating in his "nature-lyricism," his persistent ascribing of animate qualities to inanimate things, his over-elaborate anthropomorphism. But there is beauty here, and power, and if you have the patience to wade through the gray *tundra* of words, a moving sense of the Revolution.

Famous and Infamous

SAINTS AND SINNERS. By GAMALIEL BRADFORD. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1932. $3.50.

Reviewed by ERNEST SUTHERLAND BATES

A GREAT wrong has recently been done the late Mr. Gamaliel Bradford. That entertaining writer and charming person, who for a generation delighted the American public with his vivid sketches of great figures in our national history, is now proclaimed in high places as a forerunner of Lytton Strachey and the veritable founder of the modern art of biography. Thus Mr. Mencken writes, "This Bradford is the man who invented the formula of Lytton Strachey's 'Queen Victoria,'" and Mr. Mencken's indiscretion is immediately repeated by a number of critics desperately in search of American literature. It reminds one of the days when Bryant was praised as an "American Wordsworth," Cooper as an "American Scott," Whittier as an "American Burns"; it shows that we are not yet quite out of the woods of provincialism after all. And it gives Mr. Bradford an undeserved eminence which he was far too modest to desire.

Of course there is no "formula" in Lytton Strachey's "Queen Victoria"; otherwise his imitators would have equalled him; but in so far as his methods can be reduced to definition they were almost the exact opposite of Mr. Bradford's. What Mr. Strachey taught other biographers was to look behind a man's words to his deeds, to substitute minutely behavioristic for broadly idealistic criteria; he approached his subjects cunningly and warily; he remained ironically detached; there was always an undercurrent of keen intellectual criticism. Mr. Bradford, on the contrary, habitually looked to a man's words to illuminate his acts; he came up to his subject in an open, honest American manner; the undercurrent was one of emotional kindliness. Beginning his work in 1894, he naturally accepted the models of that day—the sweetness-without-too-much-light school of Stopford Brooke, Hamilton Wright Mabie, Henry Van Dyke, and George Edward Woodberry. In applying their universal tolerance in a new field—to highly controversial figures of action rather than to men of letters—Mr. Bradford gave it a new life; he may be said to have improved the pattern as he went on from year to year, but he never fundamentally altered it.

The lack of intellectual stamina—the weakness of the whole group—is still apparent in his latest volume. From a book entitled "Saints and Sinners" one may fairly demand today some new interpretation of those vague and venerable words. Any perplexed reader, however, who hopes to learn what really constitutes a saint, what really makes a sinner, will get no help from Mr. Bradford. His list is strictly conventional: his sheep are St. Francis, Thomas à Kempis, and Fénelon; his goats, Cesare Borgia, Casanova, Talleyrand, and Byron. Equally conventional are the moral judgments. The author praises St. Francis's gospel of poverty, chastity, and obedience, though he feels that they might be "onerous in practice"; he castigates the Borgia penchant for murder, Casanova's profligacy, Talleyrand's cupidity, all in the appropriate language. But it is noticeable that he writes with far more gusto of his sinners than of his saints. For the latter he finds it necessary to be frequently apologetic. Thus after writing of St. Francis, "Doubtless there were extravagances of penance and humiliation which seem almost childish... And the abstinence and the privations were destructive to a physique which was never of the best, so that Francis's last years were a story of physical suffering," he assures us. "There was no gloom about him, . . . no touch of asceticism in the tortured sense." But when he deals with the sinners no reservations are necessary. Mr. Bradford makes no attempt to correct the current over-rating of the boy bruiser and youthful gangster, Cesare Borgia, whose resourcelessness became apparent as soon as he lost the support of his papal father; Casanova in his pages is as continuously lustful, Talleyrand as continuously unscrupulous, Byron as continuously selfish,—and all of them as continously brilliant as tradition has made them out to be. As a result, if one were overly concerned about such matters one might dread the moral effect of Mr. Bradford's book. Gambling addicts may take heart when they learn that Casanova and Talleyrand largely supported themselves by that vice, and movie fans if they read of Casanova's "lifelong orgy of mad riot and licentious debauch" may conclude that if orgies can be lifelong the chief objection to them is removed. In the interest of both morality and truth it would have been well to have emphasized Talleyrand's diplomatic labors and Casanova's years of hard work upon his Mémoires.

There is, however, another aspect, in which Mr. Bradford's biographical sketches are perhaps more significant. In all times of depression there are many who take refuge in one or another form of escape philosophy. It is likely enough that today we are in for a new wave of mysticism. And while Mr. Bradford is no mystic, his dualistic outlook, his emphasis on "souls" and "spiritual qualities" as desirable, even if onerous, will appeal to many who have never had the courage of their doubts and may lead them toward a faith firmer than was Mr. Bradford's own. In that case his writings not only express an attitude of the past but forecast an attitude now struggling toward birth.

Two hitherto unknown Dickens letters and one of the earliest-known letters of Robert Burns came up for sale in London recently.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The BOWLING GREEN

Human Being

XVIII. HACK BROTHERS

HACK BROTHERS was a big department store. By a process of self-education it was gradually raising itself in the social scale. It is a dangerous transition: the humbler patrons are likely to be scared off more rapidly than the elegant are allured. But Jake and Ed Hack (especially Jake) were canny merchants; they did not hurry their improvement of tone. Like their own personal rise in cash and culture it was steady but almost imperceptible. Little by little window displays became less cluttered, allusions to Fifth Avenue crept into the advertising, even a few French words appeared on the display-cards, with the accents frequently wrong. That was before the time when humor dared to appear in department-store advertising (even now only the firms of absolute top rank venture to trifle with the gravity of the public). It was a serious epoch, the period officially known as Keeping Out of War. If any spot in the store looked a little bare, they solved the problem by planting the American flag there—those special versions of the Stars and Stripes favored by parade-meisters, with heavy gold fringes. What an essay could be written, if you found anyone rash enough to write it, on The Patriotism of Department Stores.

Hack Brothers moved steadily on the up-grade of refinement. Space was found in the lunch-room for afternoon lectures on female calisthenics or decorating the dinner table. Underwear became lingerie, stockings became hosiery, men's clothes became garb, fashion became The Mode. Floorwalker burgeoned into floor manager, buyer into merchandising counsellor. Cash carriers that chirped on wires were replaced by concealed pneumatic tubes: people don't like to see their money flying away from them so obviously. Ed Hack (but not Jake) took to wearing white piqué piping on his vest. When they put on a door-man with huntsman breeches and a cockaded top-hat, Ed's daughter Genevieve was listed as a possibility for the Junior League.

The refinement of the department store has been a subtle phenomenon to watch. Indeed it was effected so delicately it scarcely occurred to anyone to watch it. How far the store creates, how far only reflects, those sudden contagions of behavior that dominate the tribe, is too nice a question. Sensitive as a standing pool, beautifully it mirrors its age and its own peculiar culture. Quick as the mind of the artist it catches a hint, a gleam, a windy ripple of suggestion; then the whole surface sparkles with glamor, seems to move and flow. It has raised imitation and quantity to a showman's art. For those naturally infirm in taste it is even an aesthetic education. A store with imagination puts on, every day, a new and astonishing performance, collaborated between itself and its public.

When Richard first knew it, Hack Brothers was in the early stages of this exciting development. Jake Hack had made his great discovery that a department store is not just an enormous push-cart but a kind of theatre. A furniture envoy from Grand Rapids had redecorated the firm's private office with what he called a Jacobean Executive Suite. Jake took the word Jacobean as a personal compliment but he allowed Ed to sit at an uncomfortable replica of a spinet; he himself would not abandon the old yellow rolltop which oozed cigar-smoke from every pigeon-hole. From this reeking nerve-center he would make tours of scrutiny round the big building. His comments to the staff were few but pungent. Little Mrs. Beaton, the manager of the book department, was a person of permanent sprightliness; her hair was beautifully white but her eyebrows and disposition were a generation younger. "Selling any books?" asked Jake.

"Once in a while," she replied gaily.

He gazed appraisingly at the loaded counters, considering them as inventory. "Try *all* the while," he remarked.

❧ ❧

Jake Hack was interested in the book department, believing that in some mysterious way it added grace and intellect to the store. In the old days, according to a theory of the time, books and stationery and art goods had been neighbored together at the rear of the main floor. The philosophy of this arrangement was rational enough. Silk stockings and gloves and other feminine trifles put the customer into a mood of sentiment. Sentiment suggests correspondence, and one was imperceptibly in the stationery department. Writing paper led logically toward the idea of reading; reading dissolved into paint-boxes and the graphic arts, which in turn developed into toys.

But in a hopeful mood the Hacks had been persuaded that their literary patrons would appreciate more privacy. Books are not just ordinary merchandise, they were assured; they need to be examined in leisure and along comfortable shelves. Calculations were even advanced as to the likelihood of customers getting backache from bending over tables to look at the volumes. In a flush of idealism Hack Brothers installed the book department in a quadrangle of its own. Here secluded alcoves were furnished with rugs and armchairs and glass cases of fine bindings. Toys and Art Materials were shifted up to the Sporting Goods floor; only Literature's wistful consort, Stationery, still lingered near her cloistered partner. Books, so to speak, had taken the veil, but just outside the shrine the worldly sister remained faithful, consoling herself with samples of nuptial engraving in which Mr. and Mrs. Gunsaulus Bendix announce the marriage of their daughter Margaretta Beulah to Mr. Einar Tastrom.

There were fallacies in this theory of segregating the book department. In the first place it is dangerous, in the shopping arena, to give women an opportunity to sit down. Mr. Hack observed with pain that Milady (that phantom of the millinery world) was using the literary alcoves as a rest-room or rendezvous rather than as a place of purchase. Over the archway that led into the department a high-minded architect had painted, in Gothic letters, the legend *Books Are Friends That Never Age*. This, after the next ensuing Mark-Down Sale, was found so obviously untrue that Mr. Hack replaced it by the sturdy and prosaic statement, in electric bulbs, ENTRANCE TO BOOK DEPARTMENT.

Another thought might have occurred to Hack Brothers if they had known more about the matter. It is over falbalas and fanfreluches, not books, that women desire to linger and loiter and exercise the spasms of choice. In regard to books they have usually made up their minds beforehand; they know exactly what they want. ("Don't miss it, my dear.") And they enjoy the bustle and color of the open aisles; enjoy the skirmish of their many rivals pressing forward with eager toddle, alert faces turning this way and that like foraging poultry. To their quick humor it is all the fun of a social event without the strain of having to be polite. The quiet backwater of the book department frightens them just a little.—But the book department had one great advantage, daylight on street frontage. Mrs. Beaton and her clerks were never so indignant as when a customer from within the main store would come pressing through, disregarding their zealous display of Latest Fiction, merely to verify in daylight the color of some gay foulard. It was hard then for plump and mettlesome little Beaton not to be able to say, with just the right sardonic tone, "And may I interest you in a little Literature?" Oh the sum total of Things Not Said to customers, any day in any big store.

So Literature sometimes pined a little in the demure enclosure Hack Brothers had arranged for her. She is often a bit of a slut, when you get to know her; she has unduly been ascribed austere and priestess qualities by sentimental spellbinders. She doesn't always hanker for privacy—not she! She also likes to mingle with the world, to feel the warm tide of grotesque merry living. So it was sporting of her old rival Stationery to stand faithfully by and forward what patronage she could. By arts of suggestion Stationery collaborated. The Shakespeare book-ends on the note-paper counter must have helped? Though Shakespeare's vogue as a book-end didn't really begin until 1916, the 300th anniversary. (Dante had to wait twice as long to become a book-end—until 1921, the 600th year. I think no American author has yet become one of those little bronze buffers. Walt Whitman will be best, his massive head and beard will give plenty of weight.)

All this is a long way of explaining that Stationery was just outside the Book Department, and it was one of the girls from Stationery who was talking to Mrs. Beaton when Richard came in that morning.

❧ ❧

It was one of those days—travelling men know them—when everything seems clear and sensible. He had rested well in the sleeper, shaved with a new blade, reached the Tuller Hotel in time for a comfortable breakfast. He had been rather precise with the waiter about the details, which is one of the travelling man's compensations. "Grape-fruit, coffee with double cream, and a soft roll" was the way he put it. "Don't put any sugar on the grape-fruit." And now he was all opened up, which means he had unpacked his sample trunk, built up an engaging little display of books and posters on the bureau in his bedroom, sorted over his stock of jackets and circulars, and was ready to receive the buyers. He put some catalogues in his pocket and set off down Woodward Avenue, the elite highway of that city. The pleasantest thoughts came into his mind. His shoes, newly glossed, were brilliant. His hair, newly trimmed, felt comfortably close to his head and exhaled the faint sweetness of Pinaud. Seeing himself reflected in a shop-window he had one of those rare and exquisite moments of triumph. He was not the plodding drudge, he was an ambassador.

One of those mornings! Everything seemed in just balance and proportion. The gay little handkerchiefs that twirled in air must have been symbolic. He found himself saying just the right things without searching for them. Perhaps because he was conscious of his own barbering he noticed that Mrs. Beaton's hair looked even lovelier than usual. He said so, and asked her what she washed it with. For an ambassador does not plunge right into the crude matters of trade, he first establishes a mood of pleasant chat. This is not deliberate subtlety but just decent manners. The book business, more social than most, elicits a high degree of tact.

Mrs. Beaton (she was very tiny) looked up at him delightfully. She *had* washed her hair the night before and was happy about it. Under his innocent compliments she blossomed. Suddenly she realized that Erskine Brothers had a very fine list that season. Richard had sense enough to ask, before mentioning any of his own wares, how a certain Michigan novel was doing, published by another house. It was a local item, and Hacks were plugging it. "Nicely," she said. "We've just ordered another hundred." This made her feel good; without conscious decision she agreed with herself not to make an issue of that Erskine book of which she still had a dozen dead copies. Herman Schmaltz, a year before, had insisted on her taking more than she wished. Oh well, she'd get rid of them at the next Mark-Down.

"Look here, Sam," once said old Joe Erskine (the big tycoon) to the Sales Manager. "I've had a letter from Mrs. Beaton complaining that Herman refused to fill an order for 10 copies and made her take 50. Do our boys *force* the booksellers to overbuy?"

"Well Joe," retorted Sam, "you know I hire salesmen, not order-takers."

❧ ❧

"I'm all opened up," Richard said. "What time do you want to come round and look over the line? Wait till you see the window-display I've got for you on the new Hampton novel. *Carbon Paper*—is'nt that a corking title?"

"I lent *you* my advance copy," said Mrs. Beaton, turning to the girl from Stationery. "How did you like it?"

"Slick. It's a good story. If you're going to put in a display I can help out with some stuff. Why not dress the whole window with sheets of carbon paper: it'll look like black velvet if we get the lighting right."

"Fine," said Richard.

"Tell you what we'll do," said Mrs. Beaton. "I'll come round to the hotel late this afternoon and check up the list with you. And there's a dinner of the Book and Stationery Group tonight, just a nice little party, you come along. All the boys and girls in the trade will be there. But don't give away that carbon paper idea to anyone else."

"You've got a swell-looking stationery lay-out," Richard said to the other. "All that note-paper makes me want to sit down and write letters."

"Go to it," she replied. "Correct for all social usages."

"Who is that kid?" he asked afterward.

"That's Minnie Hutzler, the new buyer in Stationery," said Mrs. Beaton. "She's got a head on her."

(*To be continued*)

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

THE BARGAIN COUNTER. BY KENNETH HAYES MILLER
(WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART)

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Round about Parnassus

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

LETTER ON FRANCIS THOMPSON

ORDINARILY we cannot print long communications to this department in regard to comments of ours, but the following letter, from William Booth Papin of St. Louis, Missouri, seems to us so interesting that we are giving him the opportunity to discuss Francis Thompson from a Catholic point of view on this page. He writes:

I have just been reading your appreciative and sympathetic comment upon a new edition of "The Poetry of Francis Thompson" (with many pages of Catholic commentary). You say in your article that F. Thompson, "Both from his Catholic training and his own ingrained asceticism looked upon the physical side of love as *essentially* (italics are mine) sinful and unworthy."

I greatly doubt if even any ingrained asceticism in him made him draw any such conclusion, and he was too well informed (nay, "learned") about Catholic dogma and doctrine to have believed, for an instant, in the "*essential* sinfulness of the physical side of love." We Catholics are constantly coming upon in non-Catholic criticism and comment on Catholic teaching and belief, the literal nonsense that said teaching and belief holds to the *essential* sinfulness of the physical side of love. Catholic essential teaching and belief is quite to the contrary—and my acquaintance with Thompson's poetry (and prose) gives me no inkling that he held to your surmise, whether by natural temper, or by Catholic training.

The Catholic teaching is *emphatic* in its protests and condemnations of the *illicit* use and enjoyment of that side of love. But in itself this thing (and use) the Catholic teaching holds to be "*good*" —as all things God made are in themselves and in their licit use and enjoyment "good." Any, even casual, familiarity, say with Coventry Patmore's *prose* and poetry, could easily set you right in this matter—even his guarded comment upon the much misunderstood and difficult *doctrine of virginity*. I think you will be grateful to me if you follow my suggestion to read Edward Ingraham Watkin's recent book, "The Bow in the Clouds" (one of the new series "Essays in Order," Macmillan), where this matter is explicitly, deeply, and *beautifully* set forth and discussed —and with an especial reference to the theories of the late D. H. Lawrence and his vain and abortive efforts to extract more from the physical side of love than that side *naturally* was capable of giving. The particular chapter in Mr. Watkin's fine essay is the one called "Orange" (Love)—the whole essay is *interestingly* developed upon the analogy of the Rainbow.

Let me say, *en passant*, that it is not impossible to find among the Catholics of Ireland a certain ultra-squeamishness, or denigration, or utter ignoring of the physical side of love. This has *essentially* nothing to do with their Catholic beliefs. It seems to flow from a curious imperception (shall I say) by those "Ethereal" western, remote Celts, of the *facts* of matter, and the body—as an *integral* part of the human compositum (as Catholic dogma and philosophy distinctly and *emphatically* hold).

The Latin (*realists, à l'outrance*, always) have no squeamishness in facing frankly the total human make-up (body + soul) and even all its implications vis-à-vis the full and complete doctrine, the *pivotal* and *capital* doctrine of Christianity—The Incarnation, *e. g.*, Jesus Christ the God-Man, "The Eternal Word-made Flesh." That delightful, wise and witty *Preface* of C. Patmore to his own unique and extraordinary Book of Aphorisms, "The Root, the Rod, and the Flower," is ample comment on this matter and the squeamishness of many Catholics, lay and cleric, brought up in "Puritan" milieux.

You will find Paul Claudel's fine brochure, "Coventry Patmore," and his translations into French of several of Patmore's *deepest* and most "amorous" (?) mystico-amorous "Unknown Eros" Odes a sufficient appreciation of essential Catholic doctrine frankly and deeply stated. Mr. Claudel's Latin blood is not that of an ethereal and squeamish Celt. Like Gautier, he is one "pour qui le monde visible existe," in all its length and breadth, *depth and height*.

"And the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His Glory, as it were the glory of the Father full of graciousness and truth"—

and

"I believe in the Resurrection of the *body*, and life everlasting. Amen."

That is *essential*, *integral* Catholic doctrine and dogma—and F. Thompson knew it and felt it to the depths of his conviction and being.

WM. BOOTH PAPIN.

P. S.—Catholic ascetism is essentially based upon a scheme of *oblation*—sacrifice—vicarious sacrifice—and not on any Manichean denial or fear of matter, and the body, as essentially evil things. Catholics are not Platonists in that latter regard.

THE BOAR AND SHIBBOLETH

An interesting paper-bound volume that comes to me from Paris (Casa Editorial Franco-Ibero-Americana, 222, Boulevard Saint-Germain, 222), is *Alms for Oblivion* by Edward Doro (title from Shakespeare's "Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back Wherein he puts alms for Oblivion") a young American poet first mentioned to me, as I remember, by Alfred Kreymborg. Originally the periodical in which I write had the pleasure of printing two of the best poems in this book, viz: "The Boar and Shibboleth" and "Tonight in Philadelphia." Mr. Doro's work is distinctly original. He gives his fantastic imagination full rein. I cherish decided hopes for him. "That Cryptic Time" is a mystical vision of striking implications, and, *maugre* its shortcomings, full of dramatic poetry. The wild delineation of "The Hippogryph," despite obvious defects, has a magical quality that one finds rarely enough in the poetry of today:

Between the earth and a star,
Like a burning scimitar,
Leaping, eager, splitting the night in twain,
The hippogryph sped high and swift and far.
Fanned embers were his eyes, smoke his mane.
His thorny wings of fire clawed
At the mistiness of God,
Leaving pale, luminous scars along the sky.
With hooves of petalled flame he pawed, pawed
The gates of God—that whinnied, sharp outcry!

The manner of expression is not yet perfected, but the true afflatus is present. Here is a poet who, in his own words, is "overpowered with wonder," a poet who can write the fascinating prose piece at the end of his slight book, entitled "I, Being of Sound and Disposing Mind," in which he reviews the many-colored content of his mind, where lies "A bundle, a sorry bundle of verses, which tell the bright chimeras of my youth." All who have known him well (as he relates it) break into his house of dreams and pilfer his treasure:

All but You, Helen, You who fled heaven and climbed up the broken steps of the past to come a little way of life with me. . . .

The reference is mysterious, but no one can deny the affecting imagery of that, nor of this line

Sunlight snuggles like a shaggy dog in the corner.

It may be that Doro will do little more and remain one of those curious minor poets whose occasional lines delight the lover of wild dreams. He seems to have nothing to do with the age in which he lives, but to exist in the eternal world of symbolic vision. He is frequently inexpert almost to the unconsciously comic touch, and yet his fantastic imagination occasionally reveals dazzling possibilities.

A BIOLOGIST'S POEMS

It is strange to discover Julian Huxley, the brother of Aldous, and one of the distinguished scientists of the day, writing some of the poems that are to be found in *The Captive Shrew and Other Poems of a Biologist* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell.) It is not so strange to find him questioning that "timid atom, furry shrew," as to find him, in the course of the poem, endowing it with a soul! And a distinctly mystical rather than scientific viewpoint is displayed in the most beautiful of his love poems, a lucid utterance of which any poet might be proud:

I lie in bed alone
As quiet as carved stone.
Yet though alone, alight
With thoughts intense and bright;
Marble has no such company,
And 'tis their very speed that quiets me.

Which is greater blessedness—
To desire or to possess?

O were you but here,
What beauty would appear—
Summoned out of dark
By the passionate spark
Charged and tense with by-gone fate,
Our bodies should have power to create.

But which is a diviner fire—
To possess or to desire?

Desire that lifts its prayer
Into eternal air,
In transmutation grows
To a mystic rose;
Its fragrance fills my trembling soul
And the tired spirit swoons to waken whole.

Brooding upon trastellar things, Huxley can also be most amusing,—as when he cons that famous line, "The undevout astronomer is mad," from Young's *Night Thoughts:*

For in the starry heavens today
Things seem quite the other way,
It's really lucky Young is dead,
Or he'd be eating what he said.
A fiver to a row of beans
I'd bet him, after reading Jeans
(Or Eddington) that he'd reverse
His judgment on the Universe.
Inevitably he'd transfer
Madness from the astronomer
(Whether devout or otherwise)
And find it flagrant in the skies.

While this verse is often pedestrian, the qualities of deeply sensitive feeling and of analytical humor in Julian Huxley, which we have just striven to illustrate, make his small volume worth treasuring.

Books for Dues

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

Not long since a most estimable and energetic lady, whose duty it was to arouse the interests of a large organization of women (an organization numbering hundreds of thousands) in the art of poetry came to me for advice. She wanted to know what more she could do to stimulate a desire for poetry and to help secure recognition for promising poets. I debated her question in my mind for a few seconds and then I made bold to ask a few questions.

"How many women do you reach with your appeals?"

She mentioned the impressive figures.

"Let's see, last year you made Miss Blank your honor poet, didn't you?"

She proudly acknowledged the fact.

"And last year Miss Blank brought out one of the best books of poetry of the year, didn't she?"

She admitted the accuracy of that statement too. Then I went on.

"I happen to know the publishers of Miss Blank's book. The last time I saw a member of the firm he told me that her volume had sold some three hundred copies."

My questioner grasped the point without much difficulty and departed to search for ways and means to stimulate the sale of poetry books to her members in addition to arousing their interest in the presentation of empty and costless honors. The incident made me wonder whether or not there might be a method of increasing the sale of books of poetry which would be simple and painless for all concerned.

As the president of the Poetry Society of America, I am constantly coming across evidence of an aroused and increasing appreciation of the poetic art. In many cases this aroused appreciation is expressed by the formation of groups which gather together for the reading of poems by members. In other cases it is shown by the number of gatherings which take place throughout the entire country at which poets of more ambitious achievement are asked to read,—generally gratis.

There is a very lively concern over modern poetry in schools and the more progressive colleges. I find that students are today just as thrilled over the discovery of a new poet as I was when, as an undergraduate, I met for the first time the work of Francis Thompson and Masefield.

I should hesitate to attempt an estimate of the number of groups which are organized both in and out of schools and colleges for the creation or appreciation of verse and poetry. If I were to hazard a guess I should name a figure well into the thousands. Most of these groups, to judge from those with which I am familiar, meet informally at the houses of friends and are operated at little or no expense to the members.

What an astonishing difference it would make to the whole world of American poetry if these varied groups would all agree to require their members to purchase at least one book of verse (not an anthology) each year! The purchase of this one book could be made either in addition to or in lieu of the modest dues which these groups of poetry lovers require. The adoption of such a policy on the part of the poetry groups would certainly have manifold advantages to all concerned. First and most important of all, so far as our published poets are concerned, it would immediately add a sale of from one to two thousand copies of each worthwhile book and that (as publishers know and poets do not always admit) would probably mean doubling the sale of even some of the best books which appear. This additional sale would radically change the attitude of publishers towards the printing of verse. No one can blame publishers for not printing books which are bound to lose money but I am certain that if publishing costs were assured for work of quality and character, many publishers would look with friendlier eyes upon the printing of verse.

The effect of such a requirement upon the members of the poetry groups would be almost equally beneficial. It would stimulate their interest in searching out new and promising work. It would arouse their critical abilities by the opportunity it would afford for the discussion of work which had not already been tagged and catalogued in the files of literature. It would enable these groups, in the passage of the years, to build up respectable libraries of modern poetry either for their own use or for loan or gift to their local public libraries. Such collections, placed on the reading shelves of small public libraries, would spread still further the influence of the best of our modern work and that best is very good indeed.

I suggest that if any organization adopts this plan that it give to its members free rein as to the choice of material purchased, requiring only that each member select a separate poet and that the volume purchased shall be a first edition. This latter requirement I insert, not with any special thought of the possible extra value of the first editions, but with the feeling that such a requirement would help to keep the members alert to the recognition of good work, as it appears. Poetry does not sell so rapidly that opportunities for the purchase of first editions vanish immediately into thin air. By watching the book reviews carefully and acting promptly, doubtless a first edition of almost any modern book of verse can be secured at the publisher's price.

I believe that such a plan would be of greater benefit to writers of distinction than any further elaboration of our existing system of prizes and scholarships I do not think it would encourage to any noticeable extent the type of work which is now privately printed without even the blessing of a reputable publisher's name. Such work would doubtless continue to be published, just as it is at present, because of the natural and normal human pride in seeing one's name in print,—in any kind of print. It would benefit chiefly and most properly poets who have achieved style, which is, as Lafcadio Hearn pointed out, the essence of character.

Speaking of work which does not justify publication save for the gratification it affords the author, recalls to my mind an incident which occurred at a meeting of the Poetry Society of America a number of years ago. A visiting Irish poet of considerable reputation and with, I think, a genuinely modest spirit spoke at length on the function of poetry. In the course of his remarks he pointed out that we had achieved an understanding of the technique of verse which had enabled many men and women to write accurately and interestingly in metrical language. He said that the writing of good verse might at some time be regarded merely as a suitable accomplishment for any person with a pretense to intellect, and that such verse would be written not with any thought of publication but merely for the intellectual and spiritual exercise which it afforded its author.

"I look forward to a time" [he concluded] "when such work as my own will no longer find publication. Some time publication will be reserved for great poetry."

He had spoken at some length of his conception of the function of poetry and as he sat down a belligerent compatriot rose to his feet. His comment was more inclusive than courteous.

"I want to tell you ladies and gentle- that I disagree with iverything Mr. M. has said this evening, ixcept his isti- mate of his own worrk."

To get back to our muttons again, I suggest that our poetry groups could find no more fitting way to celebrate Poetry Week than by the initiation of the system of using first editions of modern poetry for the payment of their annual dues.

HAROLD T. PULSIFER.

New York.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received.

Fiction

THE YOUNG DIE GOOD. By NANCY HALE. Scribners. 1932. $2.

This is an unusually enjoyable, and an unusually admirable, first novel. It deals with the very youngest of the Younger Generations, the post-war, post-Hemingway, post-Fitzgerald generation which has no reason to complain that its youth was spoiled, that it is repressed or misunderstood, since it is born to the new freedom. And Miss Hale's young people are witty, talented, and charming, the very type of the Fortunate Youth. But the Fortunate Youth, Alcibiades or Dorian Grey, never comes to a good end. The hero and heroine of Miss Hale's book have so much freedom that they have no stability. They find it impossible to settle to artistic work in New York, but they cannot overcome the fascination of New York and live anywhere else; between their lack of money and the convention of unconventionality of their set they are unable to marry. They have at first a delightful, romantic friendship filled with glamorous occupations, a life which is perfect for a little while but which cannot be satisfactory for long. They drift into becoming lovers, a relationship which neither of them approves or wants, and which leads to a quarrel. They make it up, but at the end of the book they are precisely where they were at the beginning, except that the glamour of their life is wearing thin.

Miss Hale has made a keen and just criticism of the life in a certain set in New York, and it is the more telling because she does it such full justice, and writes with such evident knowledge. Her witty conversations are really witty; her stately dinner parties really stately. She has the rare gift of being able to convey charm of atmosphere, and the rarer gift of not being carried away by the charm of her own descriptions into writing of a mere fairyland. The only real flaw in the book is the introduction of a mysterious oracle, an unnamed wise man to whom the heroine telephones from time to time to ask advice. This god from the receiver is a little too tricky in conception, and he is used to point a little too plainly the moral which is abundantly evident of itself. Miss Hale seems not to have quite trusted her first novel to make its own effect; it is an unnecessary but not unpardonable diffidence, which she will probably overcome in her next book. And that is a book to watch for, for she has shown a freshness of treatment and a maturity of judgment which are rarely found together.

ICE COLD MARRIAGE. By CHRISTINE JOPE-SLADE. Bobbs-Merrill. 1932. $2.

Silliness and vulgarity are so luxuriantly entwined about each other in this novel that it is worth some notice as a sort of fantastic symbol of an entire flood of cheap fiction. Gay Clarke, the chief character, is a superlatively beautiful, gallant, youthful, and clever fashion model who supports her entire family on the exiguous wages of wearing exiguous costumes, and kindly and efficiently lays out their destinies for them. Her youth and beauty we must take on faith; her gallantry and wit are revealed in such apothegms as "It's a good life if you don't weaken," frequently repeated, and in her determination that she intends to *plan* her life instead of drifting. The plan consists of marrying a wealthy gentleman named Bim Russel and agreeing with him that their marriage is not to be consummated until they "deserve" it. From then on the bellows to the reader's flame is wondering when and how they will award themselves this romantic prize.

The gyrations of these paragons are accomplished in a whirl of cheap psychology and commonplace ideas. The entire conception of this marriage, to begin with, is baffling to our crude mind. But if the main theme is fantastic, the accompanying reactions are unhappily familiar. Parting from her brother, Gay makes "queer little tender, cooing noises of appreciation in her throat." When her husband, Bim, sees her look "as if she had been struck across the face, so white, so piteous, and so unflinching," he reminds us of all the melodrama heroes of a long past by taking " a step forward involuntarily." Terence Tatlock turns his "beautiful ravaged face" to Norah, Gay's sister, and is told, "You are my man, and life wouldn't be life without you."

These excerpts do not do complete justice to the style. From the Bright Young People of some years ago the author has learned how to be "intrigued" and has picked up compounds like grim-making and shame-making; but it must be from her own invention that she has devised epigrams like "Paris always has its long, exquisite jeweled fingers to its nose at anything real," alternating with descriptive bits like "She was like music, she was like wine, that small, white-faced woman on the bed. . . . 'Sweet fool!' he said softly. 'Sweet, tiresome fool. . . .'"

Individually these things could be matched in many a novel lacking both ability and taste. They are given unity, however, by their pervasive source, which, to our mind, is peculiarly feminine. We mean, of course, not that women novelists are worse than bad male writers, but that their characteristic badnesses are different. Even if this novel were anonymous no one would mistake it for a man's. The theme is one of sexual titillation. Sex vulgarity in men is apt to be open, earthy, coarse, undisguised; in women roundabout, trapped out in sham nobility and false refinement. Men are more ribald and less prurient in speech than women.

In the kind of bedroom farce formerly associated with the name of Avery Hopwood, for example, the spice of pursuing people in and out of compromising situations was the suggestion that they *were* being naughty together, and the whitewashing at the end was designed only to spare the blushes of innocent policemen. Nobody imagined the characters too good for such suspicions or cared about it; almost as in Restoration Comedy, it was all merely fun. But in such novels as "The Sheik" and the present opus, written by women, the heroines are virtuous prigs to a lass. We must be told that they are noble and chaste and then be invited to let our temperatures rise at the anticipation of their (always perfectly proper) loss of virginity. This desire to eat the spice of sex and retain the cake of purity too runs all the way through such books as "Ice Cold Marriage."

THE PHOENIX-KIND. By PETER QUENNELL. Viking. 1932. $2.50.

This is a book that illustrates the return to elegance, after the post-war fashion of carelessness, which we are witnessing in every department of life. It is, of course, an elegance like that of the eighteenth century, that does not imply prudery, nor forbid the calling of spades spades; it only insists that if you converse of spades you must do so gracefully, and they must occupy a necessary and not disproportionate place in the conversation. The story of "The Phoenix-Kind" is of the slightest; it is told by a young man who is naturally diffident and delicate in health, and who is from childhood eclipsed by his showy brother; he continues to admire his brother even when his keen perceptions tell him that he is only a poseur; at last he is involved in one of his brother's scrapes, dragged into the tiniest excursion into the world of first-hand experience, and retreats from it at once. Such a story is almost the deliberate negation of action; but the book moves and lives in its style.

It is a style for which it is difficult to find a word: "ornate" and "conscious" are almost condemnations instead of the praise it deserves. Perhaps one may call it *"voulu"*; every word, every pause is placed there to make its calculated effect. And just as in "Cyrano de Bergerac" Rostand's exuberance became an advantage because he was writing of *preciosité*, the elaboration of Mr. Quennell's sentences is only what is natural to the introspective mind through which his book is made to pass. The hero, driven in upon himself, has been accustomed to long trains of thought, and it is these which reach us, external observation bound up with reflection, until anything that passes before us, a London crowd at night, a foreign *plage*, a house of a particular period, is recreated in itself and in all it stands for and implies, and in all it suggests to an individual sardonic mind. It must be admitted that the parts of the book are greater than the whole; it is a book which one may open anywhere and read with admiration, but on reading it straight through one feels a certain, perhaps unreasonable, disappointment that the successive scenes are not used to illuminate as well as to vary each other, and that the whole does not reach a more definite conclusion, if not climax. But it is a book to please all readers who feel that a phrase of English should be a source of joy in itself, and not merely a mechanical contrivance to convey news of emotional shock.

TOPPER TAKES A TRIP. By THORNE SMITH. Doubleday, Doran. 1932. $2.50.

Nearly everybody must have reflected on what extraordinarily little use ghosts make of their opportunities. They can travel without any of the troubles of ticket and toothbrushes, walls and doors are nothing to them, and the better class of them appear to be able to appear and disappear at will, and yet (as Mr. Jack Bamber's friend pointed out to one of them) they persist in hanging around the most unhealthy scenes, and have no better idea of how to amuse themselves than by frightening a stranger out of his wits. It is a pleasant speculation what one would do with the powers of a ghost, and one which has been made for us in detail by Mr. Thorne Smith, the author of the hilarious "Night Life of the Gods" and "Turnabout." In one of Mr. Smith's earlier books its eponymous hero Topper was involved in an automobile accident with several of his friends, who were killed, and being people of extremely earthy tastes, became low-plane spirits, very definitely attached to the things of earth, and gifted with the power of materializing and dematerializing, in whole or in part. In "Topper Takes a Trip," Topper, on a visit to the Riviera, is revisited by his friends, who have given one of the higher planes of existence a try and have decided that the lowest plane is the one for them.

Mr. Smith's exuberant fancy makes the most of what can be done by (for a single instance) a flirtatiously inclined lady who can materialize herself, in the altogether and in sections, anywhere she likes, and who is callously indifferent to the protests of Topper at being made conspicuous by the descent of naked legs with no body to them on his lap in public. There are many merry, mad scenes, and plenty of good clean dirt. But to the admirers of Mr. Smith this may nevertheless be a slight disappointment. It has the physical knockabout farce of his other books, but it has not quite the lunatic, logical conversations in which, by some complicated pyramiding of fallacies, side-issues, and words used in two senses, one speaker was left toiling far beyond the other, which were such a delight in "The Night Life of the Gods" and "Turnabout." There is nothing in the present book that is altogether equal to the court-room scene in "Turnabout," or the hero's conversation with his books. But although, like his spooks, Mr. Smith may have temporarily abandoned the higher plane on which he sometimes used to frisk, he still, also like them, has a grand time of it on the lower one.

Miscellaneous

CATALOGUE OF DRAMATIC PORTRAITS. By *Lillian Arville Hall.* Harvard University Press.

THE VERCELLI BOOK. Edited by *George Philip Krapp.* Columbia University Press. $3.50.

SLANG FROM SHAKESPEARE. Compiled by *Anderson M. Baten.* Baten: 1603 Cellen Building, Dallas, Texas.

NUTRITION SERVICE IN THE FIELD. Child Health Centers: A Survey. Century. $2.

OBSTETRIC EDUCATION. Century. $3.

THE BUSINESS MAN AND HIS HEALTH. By *Jesse F. Eiring Williams, M.D.* Whittlesey House. $2.

SEXUAL LIFE IN ANCIENT GREECE. By *Hans Licht.* Covici-Friede. $2.50.

THE YOUNGEST OF THE FAMILY. By *Joseph Garland, M.D.* Harvard University Press. $2.

MODERN ATHLETICS. By *Lawson Robertson.* Scribners. $2.

"PECHUCK." By *Richard C. Montgomery.* Dodd, Mead. $2.50.

OF EARTH AND STARS. By *Medeci.*

REAL LIFE STORIES. Open Spaces. By *W. W. Theisen* and *Sterling.*

HUME'S PHILOSOPHY OF HUMAN NATURE. By *John Laird.* Dutton. $4.

NEWS-REEL MAN. By *Charles Peden.* Doubleday, Doran. $2.50.

TODD MEMORIAL VOLUMES. Philological Studies. Edited by *John D. Fitz-Gerald* and *Pauline Taylor.* Columbia University Press. 2 vols.

LEWIS CARROLL. 1832-1932. Columbia University Press. 35 cents.

A SHORT CUT TO GOOD RIDING. By *Singerly McCartney.* Duffield & Sven. $2.50.

Poetry readers

Here is a variety of recent books of verse to choose from

THE BOOK OF LIVING VERSE

Edited by Louis Untermeyer — Allen Tate says, "It will be the indispensable handbook of Anglo-American poetry for the next two generations; it replaces the *Oxford Book of English Verse* just as Quiller-Couch supplanted the *Golden Treasury.*" 647 pages, $2.50

SOUTHERN ROAD

Sterling Brown — A new book by a young Negro poet who writes of his people with a truly poetic and supra-racial feeling. "Interesting, impressive collection . . . its importance is considerable. It proves that the Negro artist is capable of making a genuine contribution to American literature."—*N. Y. Times.* $2.00

CAPSTAN BARS

Capt. David W. Bone — Do you know that grand old chanty SHENANDOAH? It's one of many in Capt. Bone's collection of real chanties—with words and music. "Has the salt of authenticity."—*Saturday Review.* $2.00

McARONI MEDLEYS

T. A. Daly — "Tom" Daly, famous for his dialect verse, for his light-hearted light verse in *McAroni Ballads, Carmina,* etc., has a new book. That's all the friends of this modern troubadour need to know. $1.75

HARCOURT, BRACE & COMPANY
383 Madison Ave., N. Y.

New Scribner Books

The Financial Aftermath of War
by **Sir Josiah Stamp**

A clear and practical picture of the interplay of finance, politics, and industry in the post-war world, written so that the average reader can understand what international finance is and what it has been about since the war. 149 *pages.* $1.75

Canada *(The Modern World)*
by **Alexander Brady**
of the University of Toronto

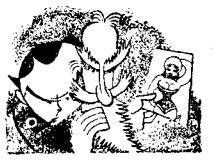
An interpretation of the forces—politic, economic, and cultural—which make modern Canada, and an illustration of the way Canadians are going about the task of establishing a nation. An invaluable book for the student. 374 *pages.* $5.00

The Spanish Crown
by **R. E. Sencourt**
author of "The Life of the Empress Eugenie"

A study of Spanish royalty from 1808 to 1931 which has the frankness of Goya and his dramatic sense of beauty. It is vivid, dramatic, and authoritative.
17 *illustrations,* 398 *pages* $5.00

In the Worst Possible Taste
by **John Riddell**

"Looks at literature through the needle's eye of raillery—and gives it the needle's other end."
—*New York Herald Tribune.*



254 *pages.* 14 *cartoons by Covarrubias.* $2.50

at bookstores

Charles Scribner's Sons, New York

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*. As for reasons of space ninety percent of the inquiries received cannot be answered in print, a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply.

Charlotte, N. C.: A book club studying "Living Royalty" wishes books about "interesting, but more obscure personages than the Prince of Wales or Queen Marie. Such people as Grand Duchess Marie and Daisy, Princess of Pless, are the types we prefer."

Topeka, Kan.: "My daughter, eight and a half years old, has developed quite a curiosity about kings and queens, how they dress and act, what they eat, etc., and her fairytale books do not satisfy her. I believe, however, that a story of a modern monarch would be as satisfactory as one about those of a more romantic period."

TAKING the little girl first, "The Story of Princess Elizabeth," by Anne Ring (Dutton), will give her many ingratiating photographs and a pleasant personal history of the opening years of as lovable and beloved a little royal life as she will find in fairytales. It amused me to read in some of our papers, after the birth of the princess's sister, that the Duchess of York had "disappointed the British public"; one had but to listen to talk of people, whether at the Ritz or the Strand Corner House, to know that the B. P. had been trembling in its boots lest a prince shoulder their darling from a possible throne. "Think of another Queen Elizabeth!" they would say, or fondly repeat how in the darkest hour of the King's convalescence the baby, entrusted with the duty of amusing Grandpa, had competently bossed him back to life.

Or there is Cynthia Asquith's "The Duchess of York" (Lippincott), making a background for the kind, spontaneous smile in her pictures, a smile cameras seem never to catch at a perfunctory moment. E. Thornton Cook has made several collective biographies that would impress upon a young reader the sense of continuity on which royal prestige so depends: "Royal Elizabeths" (Dutton) is the story of all English princesses bearing that name; a like volume has "Royal Marys: Princess Mary and her Predecessors" (Dutton), and "Kings in the Making" (Dutton) concerns the present Prince of Wales and nineteen before him.

As for the club collecting royalties, there are two quite recent lives of the King of England: "George V," by G. C. A. Arthur (Cape-Ballou), and "Life Story of King George V," by R. C. Dent (Dutton), that came out not long after he had been expected to die, with a good deal about court procedure and similar details. "Queen Mary of England," by Katherine Woodward, is probably the only authorized royal biography written by a working-girl, but Miss Woodward was meant to be a writer, as may be seen from her rich and vivid story of slum-life, "Jipping Street" (Harper).

Otherwise the club must content itself mainly with royalties on the run. "Every Inch a King," by Maria del Pilar (Dutton), qualifies on two counts; it is by a princess of Bavaria and about Alfonso XIII, late of Spain, an authorized biography, crowded with colorful accounts of state ceremonials and ending, "The story of the remainder of the reign of Don Alfonso XIII belongs to the future." The Exile of Doorn fares less favorably with his biographers. At the moment Prince von Bülow is reversing the usual process of postmortems; in his "Memoirs" (Little, Brown) of which the third of four remarkable volumes has just appeared, a living subject is dissected by a dead operator. Indeed, the late Kaiser's own mother dealt him a shrewd thrust from the grave, in the posthumous—and politely delayed—publication of the "Letters of Victoria, Consort of Frederick III" (Macmillan) correspondence so poignant one scarcely wonders that efforts so melodramatic were made to keep it from print. Everyone seems to have read Emil Ludwig's "William Hohenzollern" (Putnam); not so many the prattlings of Hermine, princess consort of William II, in collaboration with G. S. Viereck, in "An Empress in Exile; My Days at Doorn" (Sears). "The Education of a Princess" is to be followed by "Education in Exile" (Viking) and "Daisy, Princess of Pless" has been continued by her "Better Left Unsaid" (Dutton)—there seems no special reason for this title, the book being for the most part personal chatter about royalties and the well-fed. Princess Marthe Bibesco is a sympathetic but not sycophantic chronicler of kings: "Some Royalties and a Prime Minister" (Appleton) concerns Alfonso XIII, the Prince of Wales, Empress Marie Feodorovna and her sisters, Ferdinand of Bulgaria, Princess Sophie of Wied, Grand Duke Cyril, and the boy-king Michael of Rumania, and her "Royal Portraits" (Appleton) are of Ferdinand of Rumania, the late Czar, Empress Eugénie, Edward VII, and Carmen Sylva. "Lost Courts of Europe," by Fräulein von Bunsen (Harper), which brings back yesterday in Germany and in England, and the Duchess of Sermoneta's "Things Past" (Appleton), should be added to this list, and the Orient represented by Princess Der Ling's "Old Buddha," "Kowtow," and "Lotos Petals" (Dodd, Mead).

I meant to extend the range or choice by adding some of the more important recent biographies of royalties not living, having one on hand that had gathered in response to calls for books of this type. But the length of the list gave me pause. Imperial Cæsars dead and turned to clay have tempered the wind for some fifty biographers in the last three years. So if you are interested in some particular period, I shall be happy to provide information; the Stuarts come off particularly well and the period of the Second Empire. Indeed I do not see why Hector Bolitho's "Albert the Good" (Appleton) should not have a place on this club's program; he may be officially dead, but in more ways than one yet speaketh, and this life is uncommonly good reading.

I READ George Soule's "A Planned Society" (Macmillan) just too late to include it in the list of works on economics that may be strongly recommended as well for distinction of literary style. I do so now recommend, and other readers are bound to do so by mail before this gets into print.

M. W., New Haven, Conn., Public Library, questioning my belief that people who, not liking Wodehouse, would not like any other English humorist, says that she has found "many who tire of Cobb, Benchley, and Wodehouse" and yet like Canon Hannay (George Birmingham) and Whitehouse. "Well, of course," she adds, "they are both Irish." Aha, that's just it. She adds a bit of news that should be chewed by people who think that if a book is not being talked about it is not being read: "Stockton's 'Casting Away of Mrs. Lecks and Mrs. Aleshine' is not only a favorite with me but with the public. We have five or six copies and it is hard to find one in most of the time." *G. W. P., Los Angeles, Cal.*, tells the Idaho humor-seeker not to overlook Harry Leon Wilson's "Professor, How Could You?," and Clarence Day's "God and my Father"—in fact all of Mr. Day's books. Loud cries of commendation continue to come in for Katherine E. Thomas's "The Real Personages of Mother Goose," for which *B. B. B., Colorado* lately asked; *G. L. P.* says it is "utterly fascinating." *W. J. H., Gary, Ind.*, says "Because I am sure how much you'll enjoy it I want to call to your attention 'Book and the Walker' in the *Library Review* (Scotch) Spring Number, 1932. It's fresh as Spring air." *E. R. N., Stamford, Conn., Bookstore*, "tells V. M. S. to add to his collection of wordless novels in pictures Gropper's "Allay-oop!" (Coward-McCann).

REV. W. A. KASCHMITTER, Maryknoll Seminary, Maryknoll, N. Y., has undertaken for publication a survey of all Catholic educational works in mission lands; while he has a number of descriptive works by Catholic missioners he is anxious to get hold of recent governmental and *ex professo* educational works such as would treat of Catholic educational works in Asia, Africa, Oceania, and the Indian missions of the Americas, and asks that literature or letters be addressed to him in person rather than to the Seminary, to avoid confusion. Of course, this inquirer already knows the recently published "The Samaritans of Molokai" by Charles J. Dutton (Dodd, Mead), a dramatic but not overdrawn double biography of Father Damien and Brother Dutton: inspiring as the first part is bound to be, given such material, I find quite as much interest in the frank record of Joseph Dutton's life in the world and in religion, and the effect of the book as a whole is surprisingly heartening.

(*Continued on next page*)

OXFORD BOOKS SURVIVE

THE LEGACY of ISLAM

has just been published by the *Oxford University Press*. It has called forth unstinted praise. *The Times Literary Supplement* says: "This work is the latest addition to the admirable 'Legacy' series. Each chapter is remarkable as an example of compressed learning. A wealth of scholarship peeps through every line. It is a type of book fascinating alike to the specialist and any person of cultivated mind . . . Many charming illustrations add the finishing touch of excellence to a book the quality of which it is difficult to rate too high." $3.00

* * * *

Also

THE LEGACY OF GREECE $2.50
THE LEGACY OF ROME $3.50
THE LEGACY OF THE MIDDLE AGES $3.75
THE LEGACY OF ISRAEL $4.00

Of All Good Booksellers

Send for the circular on *THE LEGACY SERIES*

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS - 114 Fifth Avenue

The Hit of the Year!

STATE FAIR

A Novel by PHIL STONG

"SWELL . . ." —*Laurence Stallings*
"A JOLLY NOVEL" —*Isabel Patterson*
"EXUBERANT" —*William Soskin*
"A GEM . . ." —*Harry Emerson Wildes*

45th THOUSAND—*At bookstores—$2.50*

• • •

THE Book About the Depression

RECOVERY

By SIR ARTHUR SALTER

"Ablest effort of this kind . . ." —*Walter Lippmann*
"The most informed analysis . . ." —*Newton D. Baker*
"Incisive, sound . . ." —*Leonard P. Ayers*
"A masterly book . . ." —*London Times*

At all bookstores—$3.00

FOURTH LARGE PRINTING

THE CENTURY CO. • NEW YORK

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

At this season of the year our Circulation Department receives hundreds of requests for changes of address. We know you don't want to miss a single issue of The Saturday Review. Therefore, we shall appreciate it if you will notify us of your summer address as far in advance as possible.

THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, 25 West 45th Street, New York City

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A MENU
of the
Best New Books

THE BLACK SWAN
By RAFAEL SABATINI
Not since the days of Captain Blood has Sabatini been in such a swash-buckling, irresistible mood. $3.00

ROMANCE OF A DICTATOR
By GEORGE SLOCOMBE
The modern dictator has been put into fiction; the intrigues by which he seized power, the ruthless violence of his rule, and his private life. $2.50

SAINTS AND SINNERS
By GAMALIEL BRADFORD
"Comes near surpassing anything he has heretofore written . . . Each of these studies is in its way a masterpiece." —*N. Y. Herald Tribune.*
Illus., $3.50

HORACE WALPOLE
By STEPHEN GWYNN
"Excellent biography . . . Mr. Gwynn has done his job with a lightness of touch entirely in keeping with the character he portrays."—*N.Y. Times.* Illus., $4.50

SO YOU'RE GOING TO IRELAND AND SCOTLAND!
By CLARA E. LAUGHLIN
If you're going to Ireland or Scotland, or if you have come from there, you will want to read this chatty, informative *guide-book.* Illus., $3.50

ON BEING CREATIVE
By IRVING BABBITT
Essays on Coleridge, Dr. Johnson, Wordsworth, Schiller, the current idea of creative work, and "The Critic and American Life." $2.50

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN CO.

The Private Life of Guy de Maupassant
by
Ronald de L. Kirkbride

We see the great French artist in all his grandeur, in all his sorrow, and final madness, as we have never seen or known him before. — **Charles Hanson Towne, N. Y. American.**

The book is ingeniously written and possesses unity and balance. It is a moving and shocking story.—**Ted Robinson, Cleveland Plain Dealer.**

We catch interesting rays of de Maupassant's attitude toward his work, as well as his philosophy of love.—**Boston Transcript.**

Your shelf of biography will welcome "The Private Life of Guy de Maupassant."—**Skipwith Cordon, Baltimore News.**

An interesting and striking experiment in biography.—**Hartford Courant.**

SEARS New York $2.50

This advertisement won't sell you
KAMONGO
but ask any of the thousands who have been stimulated by it or read any of the scores of reviews that have praised it as one of the most provocative books in years. $2.00
VIKING PRESS · NEW YORK CITY

Points of View

Books and the Radio

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

For nearly a decade (and I haven't yet lived three decades), ever since I clerked in a relatively small college bookstore in Ohio, I have been interested in the sale of books, or perhaps I should say, in wondering if and why they don't sell.

I found Mr. Stokes's article in the *Review* of April 16th much to the point, in many ways; here, however, I shall be concerned with but one: namely, this statement—

> If the publishers could coöperate to the extent of clubbing together for a really fine radio hour on a national hook-up, one bookseller stated, this would have tremendous value in selling books everywhere.

Yea, yea, and again, yea! From the nation's pent-housetops we vociferously proclaim the merits of mattresses, toothpastes, paints, and tobaccos; but books —they aren't important or deserving enough, is that it? Granted, some of them are not, but should this not be an additional reason for giving proper publicity and recognition to the many good ones? I think so.

In this era of creating awareness of halitosis, dandruff, "pink - toothbrush," and tonsorial smartness, why not do the public the genuinely beneficial service of making it book-conscious? I do not wish to be misunderstood. I should propose inculcating this book-consciousness, not by attempting to instil a social fear of being poorly read, but by building within the individual the positive desire to know at first-hand what is going on in the world of books and to have the personal satisfaction which this knowledge, gained through reading, entails.

I further agree with Mr. Stokes's unnamed bookseller when he says of the proposed national radio book-hour—

> . . . most of the time on the air should be devoted to the entertainment, which should be the best that could possibly be provided.

I should like to see the result of interspersing with such entertainment the reading (by a competent reader, not an elocutionist or a crooner) of carefully selected, representative paragraphs from a few books on the lists of coöperating publishers. This "sampling" need by no means be limited to works of fiction, but the number of books so introduced per program should not exceed two or three, I believe.

If desirable, results could be definitely checked by having the radio program precede the release of any advance copies or publicity, or even by making it necessary for the listener to write to the station or inquire of his bookseller in order to learn the name and author of the book from which the excerpt was read.

Numerous variations could be worked into these radio programs; for example, conducting quizzes or contests based on book characters and personalities; dramatizing actual scenes from standard or new books; and so on, *ad incunabulam.*

No, I am not a salesman for one of the broadcasting chains, nor am I especially interested in raising the cultural level of anyone (except myself); but regarding this book-selling problem from a strictly commercial standpoint, I cannot resist the feeling that the use of the radio on a national basis by the producers of books to stimulate consumer use and purchase of their commodity, is inevitable.

F. W. PLACE.

Chicago, Illinois.

A Correction

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

A slip, typographical or otherwise, causes me to say in your issue of May 7, that Phil Stong's "State Fair" "makes its mark by what the author succeeds in doing with Abel Frake's superlative Hampshire boar and Mother Frake's no less superlative pickles." This is not quite just to Mr. Stong's novel, which has much in it, of course, beside pigs and pickles.

I said nothing about "making its mark" but tried to say that what Mr. Stong succeeded in doing with his prize hog and Mrs. Frake's pickles was "as sure-handed from a serious novelist's point of view as it is richly amusing."

New York. ARTHUR RUHL.

First Printing Matter

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

I think Miss Lone would agree with me if she examined my definition of the Papal Indulgences, 1454, as "the first *dated* piece of printing matter produced from movable type." There are only three definite facts about early printing which may be stated without equivocation: 1. The Papal Indulgence is the first book printed with an actual date. 2. The 42-line Bible was printed some time before 1456 because that date was inserted in a copy by the Parisian artist who did the rubrication. 3. The Psalter is the first book to which a printer may be ascribed because it states definitely in the colophon that it was printed by Fust and Schoeffer in 1457. All else is speculation.

There are five fragmentary pieces of printing without date, printer, or place of printing which have been assigned by bibliographers to the era between 1445 and 1450. These are considered the earliest examples of German printing. The most primitive of these is part of a leaf of a Sibyllenbuch, originally known as "Das Weltgericht" because the text deals with the Last Judgment. From the position of the water-mark in the fragment, the complete book has been estimated to have been made up of seventy-four pages of twenty-eight lines to a page. Since it is considered most primitive in technique and typography, competent authorities have placed it provisionally in the years 1445 or 1446. A unique copy is preserved in the Gutenberg Museum at Mainz.

The next three items are as many issues of Aelius Donatus's "De Octo Partibus Orationis," a popular grammar and school book, set in a format of twenty-seven lines to the page. The fragments of two are preserved at the State Library, Berlin, and the third is in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

The Calendar to which Miss Lone refers in your issue of April 30, is a single leaf printed on both sides in German verse. The year is unspecified, and astronomers have computed that it might have been either 1429, 1448, or 1467; but, according to Pollard, the Calendar does not exactly fit any one of these years. Supposing, however, that it were produced for use in the year 1448, then the printing of it must have occurred at the close of the year 1447. One could hardly say, consequently, that it is the first piece of printing matter from movable type, since typographical evidence places at least one, "Das Weltgericht," and probably three other fragments, the grammars of Donatus, before it.

It is hardly necessary to go back still farther to the tradition that printing from movable type was invented in Holland at Haarlem by one Lourens Coster as early as 1436 because the Dutch claims are certainly a moot question. Suffice it to say that there is quite an extensive body of primitive Dutch printing without date, place, or printer, partly in the native language and partly in Latin, which is known for convenience' sake as Costeriana. This group reveals the use of eight distinct types, none of which can be identified as the work of any known printer. The types, in each case, are more primitive and crude than the earliest example of any German printing. It has been quite plausibly suggested that they were cast in sand. Added to the crudeness of the typography is the fact that some of the pieces of anopisthographic, and therefore related to the wood-block books which were also printed on one side of the sheet only. Just recently I examined a fragment of Costeriana at Newberry Library which is printed in what Zedler labels, Saliceto type. The printing was quite legible, although some of the characters had retained idiosyncracies of early fifteenth century calligraphy. The "t," for example, had an extra down stroke. Utterly primitive as the Costeriana seem to be, it is improbable that any claim put forth in their behalf can ever be definitely proved or disproved, unless new contributory evidence is discovered.

My only hope by this discussion has been to call the attention of the public to the fact that the Forty-two-Line, or Gutenberg Bible, popularly accepted to be the first piece of printing done in Europe, was, in reality, preceded by at least one dated work, the Papal Indulgence, and also by a group of more primitive German printing and possibly earlier Dutch printing. Art does not spring, as Minerva did, full-formed from the head of Jove. The beautiful pages of the Forty-two-Line Bible are not the work of an amateur printer. The fragments I have discussed very naturally show a period of apprenticeship and experimentation. As for the Forty-two-Line Bible, the plan for the book and the technique of its manufacture belong to Gutenberg; but to Fust and Schoeffer we must ascribe the honor of execution. Selah! (Fine Books. By A. W. Pollard, London, (1912); Von Coster zu Gutenberg. Von Gottfried Zedler. Leipzig, 1921; Gutenberg Gesellschaft. Catalogue Raisonné par de Ricci. Mainz, 1911; The Golden Book. By Douglas McMurtrie. Chicago, 1927. (Chapter on the Invention of Printing in collaboration with Dr. Pierce Butler.)

ELEANOR A. B. BECKMAN.

Naperville, Ill.

The Reader's Guide

(*Continued from preceding page*)

"*SOME time ago,*" *says S. O. H., San Francisco, Cal., "you published a list of books on investment. I have found this list very well chosen and very helpful. Please give me a similar list dealing with speculation rather than investment.*" "Upon such occasions," says Jane Austen in "Emma," "poor Mr. Woodhouse's feelings were in sad warfare. . . . While his hospitality would have welcomed his visitors to everything, his care for their health made him grieve that they would eat."

Thus preluding, here are some books that are recent (that is, all published after 1929 and most of them lately), and people who know more about it than I have said they were good. "Introduction to Wall Street," by John Francis Fowler (Harper), called an explanation of stock market procedure for the average man and said to show the working of the machinery of Wall Street. Humphrey B. Neill's "Tape Reading and Market Tactics" (Forbes), said to give the three steps to successful stock trading. "Financial Racketeering and How to Stop It," by William L. Stoddard (Harper), an explanation of the more common methods of swindling, meant to enlighten the credulous. "Quicksands of the City," by Hartley Withers (Cape-Ballou), for the amateur speculator; English, but applying here as well. "Wall Street and Lombard Street," by F. W. Hirst (Macmillan), the slump of 1929 and the ensuing depression analyzed from a world standpoint.

E. J. H., New York, is compiling comprehenisve lists of preferred spellings as given in leading American and British dictionaries. "My three American lists will be from Webster, the Standard, and the Century, but I wish to choose British dictionaries as representative and as widely used for spelling in England and Canada. . . . Everyone tells me of the 'Concise Oxford,' which will of course be one. But the Oxford is a comparatively recent product; what other British authorities are still influential in spelling circles? For instance, where do the Imperial and Stormonth stand today and does their being out of print mean that they are out of use?"

The current "Concise Oxford" (Oxford University Press) is recent, but I do not think it contains any important changes (in spelling) as compared with the original edition which is more than twenty years old. Both editions are based on the large Oxford Dictionary (1884-1928). I imagine that all British dictionaries follow, in the main, the Oxford standard. The "Oxford English Dictionary" is regarded as authoritative and is quoted always by Courts of Law and the like in cases of dispute. Indeed, when the great undertaking of the O. E. D. was brought to a close it was celebrated as a matter of public rejoicing in England; there were dinners and speechmaking, and the *Times* kept publishing letters and statistics from the army of volunteer workers who made the quotations invaluable. That was the year when book production had reached its maddest inflation, and there were times when, struggling to keep my head above water in the flood of review copies, I had dark dreams of swapping everything in the house for a complete set of the O. E. D. and retiring therewith to Tahiti.

The Ashlar Press, conducted by August and Maurice Heckscher, has reprinted Stevenson's "An Apology for Idlers" in a very prettily designed and carefully printed sixteen-mo, set in Oxford type and with several reproductions of Bewick engravings.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Compleat Collector

Fine Books · First Editions · Fine Typography

"Now cheaply bought for twice their weight in gold."

Conducted by

CARL PURINGTON ROLLINS & JOHN T. WINTERICH

Long, Long Ago

IT is not possible for the amateur to progress far in the pursuit of the pursuable book before encountering mention of Thomas Frognall Dibdin. There is a pseudo-onomatopoetic quality about his surname that is alone sufficient to fix it in the memory, and, as proper names go, Frognall itself is not utterly forgettable. Born in Calcutta the year Paul Revere rode into Middlesex, and dying the year Winfield Scott rode into Mexico City, Dibdin was the pacemaker of a collecting epoch. But yesterday was another day, and Dibdin is now regarded (particularly by those to whom he is only a name) with tolerant patronage.

Yesterday was indeed another day—so much other that time has swung full circle and re-achieved it. For in 1832 Dibdin published his "Bibliophobia. Remarks on the Present Languid and Depressed State of Literature and the Book Trade. In a Letter Addressed to the Author of the Bibliomania. By Mercurius Rusticus. With Notes by Cato Parvus." Mercurius Rusticus spent a few days in London and wrote a long letter home about it. It was the year of the Reform Bill; the rumble of the tumbrils still echoed in the ears of men; only a few months since there had been an unpleasant succession of democratical explosions, and it was all too evident that before there were fewer there were to be more. Mercurius Rusticus was not concerned, sociologically or politically, with these phenomena save insofar as they touched the sensitive little world of books:

> Just before my departure from town, I made a few book-pilgrimages from one end of it to the other. Starting from the corner of Cornhill . . . I leisurely strolled towards St. James's Palace; calling, as my custom ever was, upon several bibliophiles in my way. To begin with my start. Time was, Sir, as you know full-well, and better than myself, when more than *one* British merchant would let his carriage drop down a few paces towards the London Tavern (for the racket and roar of the four crossing roads, or streets, put the wheels of a gentleman's carriage in great jeopardy), and its inmate would step into the shop of Messrs. J. & A. Arch—and after a little pleasant interchange of literary gossip, take down—ay, and forthwith take *up*, and away with him, into his carriage—more than one portly folio, or wide-spreading quarto. I have known a whole row of a choicely coloured *Buffon*, in the former shape—and a whole series of the *Chronicles*, in the latter shape—disposed of in a trice, by a customer, who not only knew what he was about, but who loved, as regularly as the January dividends came in, to stand square and firm upon the credit side of the booksellers' ledgers. "How comes it," quoth I, "gentlemen, that there is nothing now *stirring* in this way?—that over the gilded tops of these volumes there is a somewhat dense layer of dust? and that, across yonder set of Graevius and Gronovius, the spider hath been allowed to spin his subtle web?" The answer was prompt, and too well founded. "Bibliomania was no more. The canons of Dr. Dibdin were no longer assented to. A frightful heresy was abroad. The wished for *Reform in Parliament*, like Aaron's serpent, had swallowed up every interest and pursuit; and books were now only the shadow of what they were. However, let but a *perfect Coverdale's Bible* turn up, and we shall see whether the strong box cannot afford a settler—to the tune of £100,—for its acquisition!"

Doubtless over sets of Graevius and Gronovius the spider continueth to spin his subtle web, but a Coverdale Bible (by no means a perfect one, for the title, eight leaves, and map were in facsimile there were numerous repairs and restorations, and six leaves were supplied from another copy) turned up at the Lothian sale last January and fetched $3,700.

Continuing his journey, Mercurius Rusticus won from Mr. Pickering grudging verification of the story that he had lately disposed of a copy of Caxton's "Golden Legend"—"but the Jenson and Frobenloving days (said Mr. P. with a sub-tremulous note) are gone—never to return! Who, in these days, looks at *old* vellums or *young vellums*?" Mr. Bohn proved "as downcast as some of his neighbours; attributing the paralysis in books to the agitation of the question of *Reform in Parliament*—and adding, most justly, that 'NOW—or NEVER—was the moment to make extensive and judicious purchases. Considering his short career as a trader on his *own* bottom, he was thankful for the support which he had received, and was perhaps as well off as those about him—but it could not be denied that there was, at times, sore sighing from the bottom of the heart.'" Mr. Thorpe reported dismally: "Everything lingers: everything stands stock-still. The dust on yonder set of Acta Sanctorum will soon produce me a good crop of carrots—from the seed sown there about two years ago. Literature is perishing. The country is undone." Even Mr. Ackermann, despite the fact that "his courtesy of demeanor—his thorough *germane* bon-hommie—were as conspicuous and pleasant as ever," found things "horribly flat." Mr. Ackermann continued: "No money was stirring. The young ladies had slackened in enthusiasm. The roses and lilies and lilacs were shedding their lustre and perfumes in vain. Parents drew in their purse strings tighter than ever. The Reform had frightened away everything. The foreign market was glutted to the very throat."

Mr. Foss felt so strongly about the matter that he was moved to garrulity:

> Alas, Sir, with the exception of the Eustathius, all these lovely tomes are likely to become *stickers*. Modern books and ancient books—the *Row* and the *Via Apia*—are equally destitute of attraction. The Reform, Sir, the Reform—or perhaps booksellers, like the Romans, have had their day. Whenever we see cases of old books arrive from Milan, or from Paris, we absolutely lack the courage to open them. Not so in former times. The chisel and the hammer then went merrily to work—and ere you could say "Jack Robinson," the lovely book treasures, membranaceous or otherwise, were arranged in inviting order upon the floor. Within forty-eight hours, up started a tribe of contending purchasers, and the articles seemed to march off in double quick time, as if set in motion by the tap of the drum. How long will it be ere we hear the sound of that tapping again?

Mercurius, though he did not appear to be buying any books himself, had his Pollyanna answer ready:

> My good friend, (rejoined I) . . . Things cannot long remain at this very low water-mark—there will soon be an *ebbing*, to be succeeded by a *full flowing tide* of patronage and brisk trade. Let but the Reform Bill pass . . . and you shall see what a broadside of golden balls will be poured into the ranks of yonder closely wedged octavos and duodecimos—all sparkling in their red coats, furnished from the manufactories of *Descuil* and *De Rome*. Take courage. A reaction MUST take place.

And so on—many singers, one song. But the reaction which Mercurius Rusticus prophesied did take place, and they all lived happily ever after.

J. T. W.

Who, What, When?

The boys who write the book reviews are pretty harsh with Rudyard Kipling. In mentioning his new volume of a little verse and several stories called "Limits and Renewals" they agree in saying that it is not much good. And the boys are correct.

And yet it seems to me that they pounce upon him with too much eagerness and glee. He was a great man when he had it. Of all living authors his chance of survival is the best. That is, if he will please refrain from turning wine into water in these his barren years.—*Heywood Broun in the World-Telegram (New York.)*

THE two concluding sentences in this comment should go far and score highly in any assessment of the year's ranking non-sequiturs. What, conceding (as who will not in the instance of Kipling?) certain potentialities of survival, have barren years to do with the case? It is not the thin harvests that get remembered—it is the bumper crops. There were, perhaps, only piffling snow flurries in 1889, 1890, ff., but can these ever blot out the immemorial glories of the blizzard of 1888? The *neiges d'antan* never melt if they come thick enough.

Order may be heaven's first law, but it is the last law in the scheduling of permanent literary appraisals. A century, even ninety years, hence only a negligible fraction of humanity may recall that Rudyard Kipling's name was ever emblazoned on the title page of a miscellany called "Limits and Renewals"—a state of affairs that will impair the durability of "The Jungle Books" and "Barrack-Room Ballads" no more effectively than Milton's authorship of "A Brief History of Muscovia" has impaired the durability of "Lycidas" or the sonnets.

Dates are not, or at any rate should not be, matters of vast moment to that general reader who, in sufficient bulk, becomes the highest court of literary criticism. Hundreds of him at this minute are probably reading "The Story of a Bad Boy" and "The Luck of Roaring Camp" unaware that these were threshold books, and that beyond the door, for Thomas Bailey Aldrich and for Bret Harte alike, was a step down to a consistent level of mediocrity. At what point in their respective careers did Defoe write "Robinson Crusoe," Barrie "The Little Minister," Bennett "The Old Wives' Tale," Swift "Gulliver's Travels," or Lewis Carroll "Alice"?

Here are affairs wherein the catalogue addict has a marked advantage over his non-collecting brother of parallel literacy, or even of greater. Catalogues there are, to be sure, which list titles in alphabetical order, but such well-meant systematization results only in a superior sort of chaos. The book-collector adheres to the calendar merely as a mechanical convenience, and sequence of dates means no more to him (except that it provides a rough index of difficulty of acquisition) than it will mean to the twenty-first century historian of nineteenth and twentieth century literature.

J. T. W.

The 1931 James Tait Black Memorial Prizes have been awarded to J. G. T. Greig for his biography of "David Hume" and to Miss Kate O'Brien for her novel "Without My Cloak." These prizes were instituted as a memorial to James Tait Black, the Edinburgh publisher, and the books are chosen by the Professor of English Literature at Glasgow University.

Counter Attractions

NEW & OLD BOOKS :: COLLECTORS' ITEMS :: STAMPS & PRINTS :: LITERARY SERVICES

BARGAIN OFFERS

PRIVATELY PRINTED BOOKS. The largest publishers of privately printed and limited editions in the United States invite you to send for their free literature. Prospectuses on unexpurgated publications dealing with curioso and esoterica will also be sent gratis to adults upon request. Panurge, Incorporated, 100 Fifth Avenue, New York.

"MEMOIRS of CASANOVA," two volumes, unabridged ($15.00), our price $4.95. Send for catalogue of unusual books. APEX BOOK CO., 246 Fifth Ave., New York City.

ESOTERICA, CURIOSA, PRIVATELY PRINTED, RARE. Limited, Unexpurgated Editions. Descriptive Literature. Select Book Company, 264 Division Avenue, Brooklyn, New York.

BACK NUMBERS

BACK NUMBERS OF MAGAZINES at Abraham's Bookstore. 141 Fourth Avenue, New York.

FIRST EDITIONS

CATALOGUE TWENTIETH CENTURY First Editions and Fine Press books including Kelmscotts. Philip R. Duschnes, 507 Fifth Avenue, New York.

FIRST EDITIONS

FIRST EDITIONS AND RARE BOOKS. Catalogues issued. Wyman C. Hill, 9 Haynes Court, Leominster, Mass.

FIRST EDITIONS AND GOOD BOOKS. Books by and concerning Walt Whitman. Catalogues on request. ALFRED E. GOLDSMITH, 42 Lexington Avenue, New York.

FRENCH BOOKS

VISIT OR WRITE THE FRENCH BOOKMAN, 202 West 96th Street, New York. Catalogues, 5 cents (stamps).

GENERAL

THE POET—A monthly magazine devoted to Contemporary Verse; send 50 cents for the current number. University Press. Maple at Arcade, St. Louis, Mo.

ODD CURIOS, unusual and extraordinary books, and Autographs. Write for catalogue. State your own interests. Union Square Bookshop, 30 East 14th Street, New York.

LITERARY SERVICES

MATHILDE WEIL, LITERARY Agent. Books, short stories, articles and verse criticized and marketed. Special department for plays and motion pictures. The Writers' Workshop, Inc., 570 Lexington Avenue, New York.

LITERARY SERVICES

STORY IDEAS FOR PHOTOPLAYS, talking pictures, magazines. Accepted any form for revision, development, copyright, and submission to markets. Established 1917. Free booklet gives full particulars. Universal Scenario Company, 411 Meyer Bldg., Western & Sierra Vista, Hollywood, Calif.

YOUR MANUSCRIPT SHOULD BE sold! This office sells plays, novels, short stories, published books or produced plays for motion pictures, International connections, publications planned. Editor, literary advisor. Grace Aird, Inc., 551 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE A CONCRETE and constructive criticism of your manuscript? Or do you wish to have it polished, edited and typed? Send it to us. We have done work of this sort both for established authors and those who are just beginning to write for publication. We can assure you that your manuscript will receive careful consideration. We are particularly interested in assisting new authors. Address Editorial Service, Box Number 70, c/o The Saturday Review of Literature, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

OUT OF PRINT

OUT-OF-PRINT Books promptly supplied. National Bibliophile Service, 347 Fifth Avenue, New York.

TYPOGRAPHY

S. A. JACOBS, THE HALFMOON PRESS. Books of all kinds printed in the handsomest and most correct manner. 3 Milligan Pl., New York.

SCHEDULE OF RATES

THE ADVERTISING RATES FOR THIS classified page are as follows: For twenty or more consecutive insertions of any copy minimum twelve words, 7 cents a word for one insertion; for any less number of insertions 10 cents a word for one insertion. Copy may be changed every week. The forms close Friday morning, eight days before publication date. Address Department GH, The Saturday Review of Literature, 25 West 45th Street, New York City, telephone BR yant 9-0896.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A PLANNED SOCIETY
by George Soule
"A sane, common-sense, thoughtful book, free from wisecracking and from Utopianism, without the romance and drama of easy panaceas."
—*N. Y. Herald Tribune.* $2.50

JOBS, MACHINES AND CAPITALISM
by Arthur Dahlberg
HARRY ELMER BARNES says: "Dr. Dahlberg's volume is a shocking book. It is probably no exaggeration to say that he has presented the best concrete, graphic demonstration of the workings of the modern economic process which has ever been put between the covers of a book." $3.00

REBELS AND RENEGADES
by Max Nomad
Biographies of eight outstanding leaders of revolt or protest, each of them representing a different phase of revolutionary thought and action. *Illustrated.* $3.00

THE EXCELLENT BECOMES THE PERMANENT
by Jane Addams
"Ten memorial addresses which Miss Addams has delivered at various times during her long residence in Chicago. Those familiar with Miss Addams' previous books . . . know what fine, clear quality they can expect in whatever comes from her pen."
—*New York Times.* $1.75

THE ESSENTIAL SHAKESPEARE
by J. Dover Wilson
"An adventure in biography — it soars high and it probes deep. And its effect upon all is likely to be to send them eagerly to the reading or rereading of the plays and the poems."
— *London Times Literary Supplement.*

DEVELOPMENT OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS IDEA
by Theodore Marburg
Documents and correspondence of Theodore Marburg, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the League to Enforce Peace; a collection of source material showing how the idea of a League of Nations developed . . . "A major contribution to the history of one of the greatest events in the history of ideas."—*Dr. James T. Shotwell.*
Two Volumes. $10.00

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIMENTS IN INDUSTRY
by Nathaniel Peffer
Here is a cross-section of the educational opportunities created by large industrial firms, in purely cultural fields and in the commoner training on the job for the job. $1.50

THE EVOLUTION OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR
by Carl J. Warden
"The evolution of human intelligence, with its almost limitless capacity for cultural development, should be regarded as the central theme." . . . With this thesis, the author traces the story of the human race from its earliest beginnings to the present. He makes a daring, thought-provoking guess about the future of human development. *Illustrated.* $3.00

HUMAN STERILIZATION
by J. H. Landman
"A valuable and much needed contribution . . . a scholarly treatise, written in the scientific spirit and by scientific methods."—*N. Y. Times* $4.00

MACMILLAN

The PHŒNIX NEST

SOMETIME ago we alluded to a mispronunciation of *James Branch Cabell's* surname. *Alfred H. Holt,* of Williamstown, Massachusetts, was inspired thereby to send us a copy of his pamphlet, "Wild Names I Have Met," by An English Instructor. We are very glad to have it. He ends his letter:

> I had two reasons for not including your name in the booklet: first, I didn't know what it was, and, secondly, I assumed, rightly or wrongly, that educated people would pronounce names like that in the French fashion.

Some of Mr. Holt's "Wild Names" have taught us new pronunciations. For instance, unimpeccable as we are, we never pronounced the title of *Fanny Burney's* novel with the long *i* on the accented syllable, "Eveleyena," but it seems that the long *i* is correct. Also *Haklnyt* is really pronounced "hack-loot," even though it has been rhymed with "wit" in English poetry. Further than this, "Sawbridgeworth" is pronounced "Sapsed," God save the mark!

And Goldsmith, *really to our sorra,*
Pronounced Niagara, Niaga'ra,
While Pope, *that classy poet fella,*
Tried to call Pamela, Pamella!
As for Wordsworth's *poem, we never could see a*
Good reason for "lay-o-da-mé-a,"
And we do revolt with a rebel cry
At saying "the Duchess of Mal-fie,"
But we'll bet you an excellent bottle of hooch
That Sir Arthur *is always* Quiller Cooch;
And if you wish to be very ribald
Always for Theobald say Tibbald,
And make a more peculiar noess
When you detonate "John Coo-per Poess."

We thank *Mrs. Archibald Clarke* of San Diego, California, for a nice letter, even though we are *not Stephen Vincent Benét.* We are glad she is an admirer both of *Chris Morley* and of "Max and Moritz." It is true, as we amended our original statement recently, that the latter is *not* out of print. . . .

Harper's will publish this fall "The Provincial Lady in London," by *E. M. Delafield,* another "Diary of a Provincial Lady." We are going to be one of its most ardent readers, as the former book is one of our prime pets! . . .

Alice Boorman Williamson of Washington, D. C., sends us the subjoined:

JUST TO BE SMART

Just to be smart is not enough;
To sling sophisticated guff
In manner careless and blasé,
Expecting a bored world to pay
For all (or any) of your stuff.

No; it will call your airy bluff—
You know you wrote that bit of fluff
(Not having something new to say)
Just to be smart!

Here is a play you dare not muff:
The ball is tossed—roll back your cuff!
Who enters in this game must stay
(One moralizes by the way).
But, after all, it's rather tough
Just to be smart!

Again alluding to *Christopher Morley,* his brother, *Felix Morley,* has just had published through the Brookings Institution "The Society of Nations, Its Organization and Constitutional Development." "In this single volume," say the publishers, "will be found the answer to virtually every question which is today being asked about the League of Nations." Also an entire chapter of the book is devoted to the Sino-Japanese crisis. The book may be had of The Brookings Institution, 722 Jackson Place, Washington, D. C. . . .

Macmillan has just published *George Soule's* "A Planned Society," which should be a most rational examination of modern industry. Mr. Soule now occupies an enviable place as one of the most cool-headed and straight-thinking of those interested in a better social and industrial scheme. He knows the industrial situation in America at first hand. . . .

In his Spring catalogue Sampson Low, the English publisher, listed—according to *Dan Longwell* of Doubleday's—"Sir Kenelm Digby and His Venetia," by *E. W. Bligh.* Some twelve years ago, when *The Saturday Review of Literature* began as a supplement to *The New York Evening Post* under the title of *The Literary Review,* Messrs. *Morley* and *Benét* alternated in writing the column which has now in process of time become *The Phœnix Nest.* Mr. Morley evolved the original title for that column, *The Literary Lobby,* and also suggested the name to be signed to it, which was *Kenelm Digby.* Digby became quite a character around the office. Today, though Mr. Morley does not collaborate with *The Phœnician,* he is always a welcome contributor to the latter's column. And in his honor and that of the real Sir Kenelm Digby we print here the

SIR KENELM DIGBY

paragraph that Longwell culled from the book to which he has called our attention:

> He [the real Sir Kenelm] has been wrongly estimated in the popular view as the author of certain receipt books and as the inventor of the Sympathetic Powder. In this book he is seen in an entirely different light, as pirate, diplomat, author and literary critic, courtier, and, above all, great lover. In his "strangeness," his love, his spirit of curiosity, his vanity, his journeyings on political missions (he had the distinction of being thought mad by the Pope), his faithfulness to an ideal (that of his starry Venetia), his love of learning, and his great personal presence, he may be taken as an epitome of the troubled and poetical seventeenth century.

Have we mentioned that *Gilly Gabriel's* "I, James Lewis" (Doubleday, Doran), is a novel worth your buying? We think we have. An interesting item connected with it is that Gabriel first learned of the catastrophic deed upon which his book is founded from *Constance Lindsay Skinner's* contribution to the Yale "Chronicles of America." For several years Gabriel, who is dramatic critic of the New York *American,* delved into all possible source books, lived for a while in Astoria, Oregon, steeped himself in Chinook and totem lore, and made a leisurely freighter trip up the west coast to plot for himself the *Tonquin's* course before he began to write of Lewis's adventure. . . .

Recently at lunch we met *G. A. Borgese,* LL.D., the highest-paid journalist in Italy, critic, novelist, and professor at the University of Milan. He has been giving a series of four lectures on Poetry at the New School for Social Research. He came to this country as visiting professor at the University of California, and is now lecturing at Yale and Harvard. His first appearance in America is under the auspices of the Italy America Society at 745 Fifth Avenue, this city. . . .

The Committee for the "Prix Femina Americain" held its last meeting for this year on the afternoon of May eleventh at the home of *Mrs. Henry Goddard Leach,* where the members voted for the three books to be submitted to the Prix Femina Committee in Paris as candidates for the award. The prize was established this year by *Madame Jeanne Dauban,* and is to be awarded annually to an American author, man or woman, whose work in prose or poetry can best express to France the spirit and character of America. On May 17th last a reception was given by *Mr. and Mrs. Gerrish Milliken* to celebrate the founding of the association, and shortly after Madame Dauban sailed for Paris with the three selected books.

THE PHŒNICIAN.

A *Morley* BOOK *about* BOOKS

"Hidden within the pages of this beautifully manufactured volume are nuggets of book lore, strange incidents and anecdotes connected with publishing and authorship, shy confessions of personal experience and much sage wisdom . . . thoroughly delightful."—*Phila. Ledger.* $2.00

EX LIBRIS CARISSIMIS
by Christopher Morley
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA PRESS
PHILADELPHIA

This advertisement won't sell you
KAMONGO
but ask any of the thousands who have been stimulated by it or read any of the scores of reviews that have praised it as one of the most provocative books in years. $2.00
VIKING PRESS - NEW YORK CITY

PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; exchange and barter of literary property or literary services; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, travelling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature; expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). Rates: 7 cents per word. Address Personal Dept. Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

SKILLED printer with small office operated entirely by himself will privately print small booklets, announcements, etc. Absolute secrecy assured. No proofs or samples retained—client gets every copy. Only non-actionable MS. accepted. Address X, care Saturday Review.

CASTLE in the Austrian Alps, long a private residence, will take a few paying guests this summer. Lessons in German may be had from a university teacher. Trout fishing. Rates very reasonable. References desired. Z, c/o Saturday Review.

THREE years ago I brought over from Sardinia two of the smallest and most persuasive donkeys in existence. They were (1) a male entitled "Donkey Hotê," and (2) a female, "Donkey Schön." "Donkey Schön" departed this life. Unable to produce a progeny with one (male) donkey, I am now offering this animal for sale. The buyer will be furnished with papers attesting his noble lineage, his good character, and his dog-like (not dogged) disposition. I might add that he figures in my forthcoming volume, "The Donkey of God." A copy of the volume will be given upon publication to the buyer. I will not only put my signature in the volume, but I will be happy to autograph the donkey. Louis Untermeyer, Elizabethtown, Adirondack Mountains, New York.

FOR rent for the year 1932-1933 home of a writer on the outskirts of New Haven. Large library, two-car garage, ample rooms and baths, fully furnished, garden and terrace, excellent neighborhood, very reasonable terms. Apply to A. B., Saturday Review.

COMPETENT editorial worker, woman with experience, wants part time work on manuscript, proof, or criticism. Address MC, Saturday Review.

WILL readers who feel that certain books of 1931 have been unduly neglected by critics or bookbuyers send titles to writer who is preparing a paper upon the subject. Address J, Saturday Review.

WILL young lady who discussed editorial on sex literature in The Saturday Review *on the beach at Venice, California,* send her name and address to interested party. Address B, Saturday Review.

I have sent Mr. Alfred Knopf a MS. Is the fine taste which has governed his choices in the past still operative? Please reply without a rejection slip. Q, c/o Saturday Review.

FREE. Subscribers to The Saturday Review may have their subscriptions renewed free of charge, if they will send to the business office three new subscriptions.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED